

THE FORMULATION OF AN INSTRUMENT TO ASSESS
INTERPERSONAL MEANINGS OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

By

DAVID N. BERNSTEIN

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

1982

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



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Dedicated to my father for his support
in this venture and to my mother who
would have been very proud.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chairperson, Dr. Harry Grater, whose provocative questions and insightful comments continually challenged me to reach the upper limits of my creative potential. His friendship and sense of humor were a constant source of encouragement and enjoyment.

I would also like to thank my other committee members, Drs. Algina, Froming, Miller, and Nevill for their helpful suggestions. I am very grateful for their support. The ideas contributed by Nina Issenberg were also greatly appreciated as were the time and energy she spent typing the data cards. To Cheryl Phillips, who always seemed to know what was going on, I owe more favors than I can ever repay. I am grateful for her kindness, cheerful outlook, and genuine willingness to listen. Somehow she was always able to smooth the roughest parts of this journey.

There is probably no way to endure in a difficult graduate program without good friends. I have been very lucky in this regard. I especially want to thank Jim Ansel, whose warmth and laughter I will miss. To Jim Huber, my alter ego since the beginning, go my sincerest thanks for allowing me to adopt his family as my own. I cannot imagine what the graduate school experience would have been like without him.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTERS	
I INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	1
An Historical Overview	3
Recent Research on Sex	8
Research on the Interpersonal Meaning of Sexual Experience	12
Theories on the Meaning of Sexual Experience	19
Instrument Development: Factor Analysis	27
Instrument Development: Assessing Reliability and Validity	28
Hypotheses	31
II METHOD.	33
Subjects	33
Procedure.	33
Instruments	35
III RESULTS	38
Analysis of the Meaning of Sexual Experience	
Questionnaire--III	38
Analysis of the Meaning of Sexual Experience	
Questionnaire--III	42
Sex Differences in the Meaning of Sexual Experience.	56
Summary	63
IV DISCUSSION.	65
The Interpersonal Meanings of Sexual Experience.	66
Sex Differences in the Meanings of Sexual Experience	
.	72
Generalizability of the Results.	79
Counseling and Clinical Applications	80
Directions for Future Research	81

APPENDICES	PAGE
A THE MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE--III.	85
B ADJECTIVES INCLUDED ON THE MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE--III.	88
C SEXUAL FUNCTIONS MEASURE	90
D THE INTERPERSONAL MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE ADJECTIVE SCALE.	94
REFERENCES	98
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	105

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Council
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
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David N. Bernstein

May 1982

Chairman: Harry Grater

Major Department: Psychology

This research attempted to validate an instrument devised to assess interpersonal meanings of sexual experience. Little empirical research has been conducted in this area but there is a consensus in the theoretical literature that dimensions of meaning such as affiliation, dominance, and pleasure do exist for sexual experience, and that they are differentially salient for males and females. It has been suggested that an individual's sexual attitudes and behaviors would be more comprehensible if the meaning that sexual experience has for the person were known as well.

The Meaning of Sexual Experience (MOSE) adjective list includes seventy adjectives that are scored on a seven-point scale depending on how descriptive the adjective is of the individual's meaning of sexual experience. A factor analysis of the data collected from 326

undergraduates at the University of Florida yielded five statistically and conceptually valid dimensions of meaning which were labeled affiliation, inadequate/undesirable, achievement, moral, and erotic dominance. Males' and females' average factor scores were compared and significant differences were found with males scoring higher on achievement and erotic dominance, and females scoring higher on affiliation and moral. No significant difference was found on the inadequate/undesirable dimension.

Another sample, including thirty males and thirty females, completed the MOSE adjective list twice, once for themselves and once as they believed a typical member of the opposite sex would. The self-reports yielded relatively small sex differences on the five meaning dimensions, but substantial differences were found between the self-report perceptions and the perceptions reported by the opposite sex. Both sexes scored themselves higher on the affiliation dimension, for example, than they were scored by the opposite sex. Females scored males highest on erotic dominance and achievement followed by affiliation whereas males scored themselves highest on affiliation followed by achievement and erotic dominance.

It was concluded that the validity and reliability of the MOSE were supported. Several research investigations using the newly devised instrument were suggested to provide further support for its validity and to accumulate more information on between group differences with respect to the meanings that emerged in this study.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Only in the last hundred years has research in human sexuality become firmly established. The accumulation of knowledge has been punctuated by major breakthroughs such as the works of Ellis (1936, 1942), Freud (1963), Kinsey (1948), Masters and Johnson (1966), all of whom had in common their willingness to challenge social mores by delving into forbidden realms. An area that has not been empirically researched is the interpersonal meaning of the sexual experience.

"Meaning" is defined here as the "why" of sex. It describes the needs that an individual satisfies by participating in sexual experiences, and the personality styles adopted in pursuing sexual experience. Terms such as dominance, aggression, and affiliation will describe some of the meanings that may be ascribed to sexual experience. Although some authors have stressed the importance of understanding the meaning that the sexual experience holds for the individual involved, and although many authors list dimensions of meaning, there have been practically no studies validating the various theories. The present study seeks to provide confirming or disconfirming evidence for the existence of some of these hypothesized meanings of sexual experience through: (1) the construction and validation of an instrument designed to elicit the meanings, and (2) an examination of male-female differences with respect to the instrument.

Due to the paucity of research on this issue, a literature review that focused solely on studies determining the meaning of the sexual experience would be exceedingly brief and not very helpful. It is instructive, however, to review the literature on sexuality for the purpose of inferring the meanings. This can be accomplished in two ways. First, the role that sexuality played in people's lives during any particular historical period can imply dimensions of meaning. Secondly, and especially useful more recently, the types of studies being conducted at any time implies both what was deemed important about sexuality and what was deemed permissible to study.

The following review combines these types of evidence for the dual purposes of examining how the meaning of sexual experience has changed or remained the same historically, and theorizing what it might be today. The review begins with an historical overview because it is the author's belief that sexual experience can only be meaningfully understood within the context of societal evolution. Following this review, the more recent literature will be discussed to illuminate the types of questions prevalent in today's research and, therefore, to infer the meaning of the sexual experience in today's scientific community. The third section will review theories and hypotheses with respect to the interpersonal meaning of the sexual experience, some of which will form the theoretical underpinnings for this study. As this study focuses on the design and validation of an instrument, the fourth section of this review will discuss literature pertaining to factor analysis, reliability, and validity.

A Historical Overview

Early in history, love was not a crucial part of sexual experience. J. McCary (1976) notes that "Christianity, following the Jewish tradition.....idealized the purity of love apart from sex. Love of God was the only 'pure' love and celibacy became a means of proving one's love for God" (p. 46). Sex was for the purposes of procreation only.

Later, the relationship between a knight and a lady whose husband was off at the Crusades was perceived as romantic love but tended not to include sexual intercourse. Chivalry and chastity were the rules. During the Renaissance, love as an aspect of marriage occurred only accidentally. Not until the 1800's were romantic love and marriage and, therefore, romantic love and sex, gradually blended. McCary cites the Industrial Revolution as the period during which the first attempts were made to combine sex, love, and marriage into one unique experience for men and women. For the first time the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience began to include affiliation or love.

During the 1800's the meaning of sex changed, especially for women, as the Puritan view of the female as sexual temptress gave way to the Victorian view of her inherent purity and innocence (Wilson, Strong, Robbins, & Johns, 1980). Chastity was important for both males and females but the males' chastity resulted from an internal struggle while females simply had no sexual feelings. As scientific materialism replaced religious authority, moral codes were enforced by scientific proof of inevitable disease and insanity rather than

religious warnings of mortal sin. In the 1830's, marriage manuals and books on sexual physiology began to appear. Shade (1978) describes the Victorian's emphasis on the female's role as guardians of the morals of society but adds that the late Victorians were not quite as repressed as pictured. Evidently, then, the meaning of sexual experience remained different for males and females. It was thought that part of the male's nature was to seek sex whereas the female's role was to allow sex when it was appropriate. Here the dominance and submission themes of sexuality with strong overarching moral themes can be inferred. As will be seen, current theories of the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience often continue to echo these sex differences.

The Victorian decency wave lasted through the nineteenth century suppressing information about sexuality and leaving many people uninformed and anxious. Havelock Ellis was among them and his studies on the psychology of sex (Ellis, 1936, 1942) resulted from his discomfort. He states: "I determined that I would make it the main business of my life to get to the real natural facts of sex apart from all would-be moralistic or sentimental notions, and so spare the youth of future generations the trouble and perplexity which this ignorance has caused me" (1936, p. ix). He reasoned that the study of sex should properly be within the domain of science: "Now I do not consider that sexual matters concern the theologian alone, and I deny altogether that he is competent to deal with them" (1936, p. xxix). Ellis' work created a furor and resulted in the arrest, in 1898, of one George Bedborough for selling Ellis' works. Interestingly, Ellis himself was not arrested.

Despite the outcry, the doors to the scientific study of sex had been opened and sexual experience was no longer solely confined to the purview of the moralists.

During the early 1900's, Freud (1963) caused changes in the meaning of sexuality by proclaiming it as one of the primary human motivations. He discussed the existence of sexuality in infancy and childhood, and its role in adult emotional problems. He dismissed the Victorian notion that females did not have sexual feelings. The meaning of sexual experience for females could no longer be restricted to submission and procreation. Although Freud was a benefactor of women in the sense that he supported their sexual feelings, his theories of male-female differences (especially penis envy) were not well received by female theorists and are still a sore spot among today's feminists, with many male theorists concurring. Clara Thompson (1950) wrote that the problems of women's sexual life is not penis envy but cultural attitudes of the unimportance of the female sex drive. Despite the arguments over the validity of Freud's claims, the meaning of sexuality, especially for females, was changed. The sex drive was no longer restricted to men. Freud's theories led to much discussion but, unfortunately, prompted little research, and, although sexuality was now appropriate for scientific study, it was not until 1947 that sexology, the study of sex, truly emerged with the publication of Kinsey's data on sexual behavior and attitudes (Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953). Kinsey's work illuminated what was actually occurring and legitimized, by sheer weight of numbers, much ongoing sexual experience. Gecas and Libby (1976) note, however, that one of the greatest shortcomings

in Kinsey's work was his failure to take into account the meanings that sexual activity has for people. Nevertheless, the meaning of sexual experience in the society was again changed, especially the notion that one rarely, if ever, discusses these matters.

Bringing sex further into the open seemed to lead inevitably to the cultural demand for competence. LoPiccolo and Herman (1977) write that earlier societal messages were that sex is good, but only for men, while the post-1940's message was that sex is okay for both males and females, and you had better be good at it. They add that "Over time a number of negative themes regarding sexual conduct have emerged; it was seen first as sinful, then as physically dangerous, next as a symptom of psychological immaturity; and finally as a required ability" (p. 182). To the interpersonal meanings of sexual experience previously described we now add competence, mastery, or achievement.

Kinsey's research spurred many others to study sexual attitudes and behaviors and the meaning of the sexual experience for the scientific community came to be: What do people do and under what circumstances do they believe it is proper to do it? As the research grew, sexology gave rise to its own journals, further establishing sex as a scientific field of inquiry. The Journal of Sex Education, edited by Norman Haire, and the International Journal of Sexology, edited by A.R. Pillay, ceased publication with the death of their editors in the 1950's. In 1957, the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex was founded by Hugo Beigel, Albert Ellis, Henry Guze, Robert V. Sherman, and Hans Lehfeldt, leading to the publication, in 1965, of the first issue of The Journal of Sex Research. Money (1976) describes four current branches of sexology:

experimental and investigative, clinical and therapeutic, education and training, and standards and certification.

Closely following the inception of the new journal, Masters and Johnson (1966) published their studies of the physiological and anatomical aspects of sexual response. They presented a case for the similarity of male and female sexual response. By scientifically validating females' ability to have orgasms, they extended the performance and achievement meanings of sex to women. Women had gained the right to orgasm, but with the right came the obligation.

Through the 1960's the scientific community was attempting to understand the how, what, where, and when of sex. The acceptance of sex as a valid topic for scientific study helped change the meaning of sexual experience to a more natural and acceptable aspect of life for both men and women. But science had also helped create the current atmosphere wherein people are overly concerned about their performance. Witness Masters and Johnson (1970): "It should be restated that fear of inadequacy is the greatest known deterrent to effective sexual functioning, simply because it so completely distracts the fearful individual from his or her natural responsivity by blocking recognition of sexual stimuli either created by or reflected from the sexual partner" (p. 12-13). The position taken here is not that science caused this performance anxiety but, rather, that there is an interaction between sex as perceived by society and sex as studied by science. Given this assumption, it is important to be aware of how science is studying sex. The following section examines some of the types of research currently being published.

Recent Research on Sex

A great number of studies have been published as an outgrowth of Kinsey's (1948) work representing a continuing focus on the sexual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of the culture. The simplest research design is the tabulation of activities or attitudes. Bentler (1968a, 1968b) describes scales which assess the extent to which a male or female has engaged in heterosexual behavior, and Podell and Perkins (1957) use a similar scale to ascertain whether heterosexual experiences can be ordered along a unidimensional, cumulative scale. Similar studies are still being published today. McBride and Ender (1977) sampled college students' sexual behaviors and their attitudes as to which sex is responsible for birth control, initiation of sexual activity, and sexual satisfaction. Mancini and Orthner (1978) computed husbands' and wives' preferences for sexual and affectional activity at different stages in marriage. Attitude data have been compiled for a sufficient amount of time now so that research can examine changes in sex behaviors and attitudes over twenty-five years (Finger, 1975).

Related to this line of research are studies which questioned who is responsible for influencing sexual encounters (McCormick, 1979; LaPlante, McCormick, & Brannigan, 1980). Generally the stereotypic beliefs that males are expected to use influence strategies for having sex, and females are expected to use strategies for avoiding sex, were supported.

A more complex research design attempts to correlate the above-mentioned behaviors and attitudes with other psychological constructs. Androgyny is a commonly used variable analyzed in research such as Walfish and Myerson's (1980) study relating sex-role identity to sexual attitudes. Jurich and Jurich (1974) had limited success in their attempt to relate cognitive moral development to premarital sexual standards, and Jurich (1979) was unsuccessful in determining which of several demographic, personality, and environmental variables was the best predictor of premarital sexual standards.

Another outgrowth of Kinsey has been the development of assessment scales. A scale for the comparison of attitudes of couples was devised by Foster (1977) in an attempt to determine sexual compatibility. LoPiccolo and Steger (1974) created the Sexual Interaction Inventory using behavior-based items to assess sexual dysfunction. Although this scale has since been used often in other studies, it has been criticized by McCoy and D'Agostino (1977) who report that their factor analysis of the items yields "factor sets which are multiple and essentially psychologically meaningless" (p. 30).

Another variable that has been related to sexual attitudes and behaviors is sex guilt. Mosher (1968) reported that it was possible to discriminate subcomponents of guilt such as sex guilt, and D'Augelli and Cross (1975) found some indications of relationships among sex guilt, moral reasoning, and premarital sex. Gerrard (1980) and Mercer and Kohn (1979) published similar studies again comparing sex guilt to premarital sex.

The attention paid to attitudes and behaviors has uncovered important information, but when attitudes and behaviors become the sole basis for understanding sexuality it is misleading. Kelley (1978), for example, presents a theory of human sexuality that relies on attitudes and behaviors, to the total neglect of the interpersonal meaning of the sexual experience. Using a five-point scale, items such as "I really enjoy sex" and "Strictly from the physical point of view, sex isn't all that enjoyable" are presented. The author, while correctly questioning whether sex is enjoyable to the individual, neglects to ascertain what it is about sex that makes it enjoyable: What does it mean to the individual? Hornick (1978) creates a complex path diagram of a theoretical model of premarital sexual attitudes and behavior including background variables, family and peer group variables, psychological variables such as religiosity and self-esteem, and attitudinal and behavioral variables but, again, omits variables relating to the meaning of sexual experience.

The concern with attitudes and behaviors has also led to studies examining family dynamics that may lead to sexual activity in adolescents (Young-Hyman, 1977). Kristal (1979) looked at the influence of father-daughter relationships in particular. Attitudes toward sexuality have been further studied in research designed to test the efficacy of intervention. Changes in attitudes resulting from courses in human sexuality were assessed by Dearth and Cassell (1976), Zuckerman, Tushup, and Finner (1976), and Story (1979). Changes in attitudes resulting from sex therapy were studied by Clement and Pfafflin (1980). In the latter study, both the men and women became less sex-role stereotyped

in their attitudes. Perhaps the attitude change resulted from or paralleled a change in the interpersonal meaning.

Despite a distinct emphasis, sex research has not been confined to attitudes and behaviors. Attempts to understand what stimulates us sexually have led to the study of slide presentations (Sigushi, Schmidt, Reinfeld, and Wiedermann-Sutor, 1970) and fantasies (Hariton and Singer, 1974). Personality variables have also been examined with respect to sexuality. Eysenck (1971a) found extraverts to have earlier and more diverse sexual experiences. In other personality research, the MMPI was used by Husted and Edwards (1976) to correlate personality dimensions with sexual arousal and behavior. They found the important MMPI scales to be depression, social introversion, defensiveness, and experience seeking. Self-actualization has also been studied with respect to sexual enjoyment (Paxton & Turner, 1978; Waterman, Chiauzzi, & Gruenbaum, 1979).

Sexual arousal has also been related to aggression. Barclay (1971) reported that sexual arousal led to increases both in sex motivation and in aggression motivation. Gelles (1975) found men more likely than women to associate sex and violence in fantasies.

The above studies represent a sampling of types of research in the field today. The focus is clearly on the what, when, where, and how of sex. But studies of attitudes, behaviors, and physiology, while important, are all somewhat reductionistic in their approach to sex. It is felt by this author that these approaches could become more three-dimensional with the addition of "meaning," the "why" of sex, to our knowledge of attitudes, behaviors, and physiology. Eysenck

(1971b) pointed out that taking part in a sexual activity is not the same as enjoying it. Certainly it could be important to know whether an individual partakes in kissing due to submissiveness or due to affection.

The studies that follow have been sifted out because they do, to differing degrees, begin to examine the meaning dimension. Since the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience has not often been directly studied, it has been difficult to differentiate between those studies that do touch on this issue and those that do not. Therefore, no implication is intended that the following studies are clearly discrete from those already discussed.

Research on the Interpersonal Meaning of Sexual Experience

Schildmyer (1977) combined reports from college students with those from members of community organizations. Over two hundred and fifty subjects were interviewed, ranging in age from sixteen to sixty-four, in an attempt to identify variables relating to the positive sexual experience. The psychological components, not the physical components, were found to be the most frequently reported aspect of the positive sexual experience with the primary factor being the quality of the relationship between the two people. In light of current concerns about expertise in technique, it is noteworthy that the physical components were not primary. It also confirms the importance of attending to the psychological variables in research on sex.

Hessellund (1971) attempted to understand the meaning of sex for men and women by questioning the individual's motivations for involving

themselves in coital acts. Hessellund reasoned that this motivation could not simply be relief from physiological tension for, if it was, masturbation would suffice, and it could not be reproduction except in a small fraction of the cases. This reasoning again points to psychological motives. Open-ended questions were used such as "Give a brief characteristic of your reactions to your first coitus?" Females responded negatively to this question much more frequently than did males. By using questions such as the above, the author could only indirectly judge the meaning of the sexual experience, but it was possible to support some sex differences. For example, males more often felt that their first coitus had a great effect on their lives.

In another study of male-female differences, Kanin, Davidson, and Scheck (1970) examined the experience of love. The romanticism studied has relevance to the meaning of sexual experience. Males were found to be more romantic in that they tended to experience the feeling of being in love earlier in the relationship. Once in love, however, the stereotyped romantic reactions such as "floating on a cloud" or "having trouble concentrating" were associated more with the females. Although the authors in this study were not examining sexual experience, an analogy may be drawn if the meaning of the sexual experience is found to change over the course of a relationship as did the experiences of love. Perhaps, for example, sexual experiences have one meaning for males when they are not in love and another when they are.

The following two studies questioned peoples' reasons for having or avoiding sex, and are therefore closer to being precursors to the

current research. Finger's (1975) study has been mentioned previously as a comparison of attitudes and behaviors of males over a twenty-five year period (1943 to 1967). In addition to attitudes and behaviors, Finger looked at the reasons given for justifying premarital sex. In 1943, male college students gave "acquisition of knowledge and skill" as a justification, believing that sexual skill would increase the likelihood of success of the marriage. Interestingly, those abstaining also justified their behavior as increasing the likelihood of success in marriage but, in this case, due to trust and respect. The students in 1967 added to the earlier justifications the belief that the success of the marriage depends on sexual compatibility which therefore should be evaluated in advance. They also added that sex is a pleasant experience, so why wait? Finger notes that although some moral and religious grounds were mentioned in 1943 as reasons for abstinence, almost none were mentioned in 1967. These justifications imply meanings of sexual experience such as competence, trust, pleasure, and morality. Peplau, Rubin, and Hill (1977) found females more likely than males to mention ethical standards (morality) as justifying abstention from sex. Sex was a more important component of a relationship for males and was also more important as a dating goal. This implies some gender differences in the meaning of sex. Interestingly, although the authors had hypothesized that sexual satisfaction would be more closely associated with love for females than for males, this difference was not supported.

The interpersonal meaning of sexual experience is also important to understand in cases of sexual dysfunction. Kaufman and Krupka (1973),

reporting on a sexual therapy group program at Michigan State University, discuss six dynamic interpersonal processes which produced sexual dysfunction in their clients: (1) Early deprivation of affectional needs leading to the sexualization of the need for intimacy. This might correspond to a highly affectional meaning of sexual experience. (2) Guilt: In many cases the parents had not given their opposite-sex children permission to seek sexual gratification. Sexual experience had highly moral meanings to these clients. (3) Power struggles: In this situation winning or being right becomes more important than being close. The authors believe this meaning to be rooted in earlier parental relationships. (4) Hostility: Unexpressed anger can lead to impotence, avoidance of sex, lack of orgasm, or a retreat into helplessness. (5) Expectations: A competency meaning of sexual experience can lead to debilitating anxiety. This has been previously noted in a quotation from Masters and Johnson (1970). (6) Adequacy and potency: Closely related to expectations, a feeling of potency may lead to fear of reprisals. People may have not only a fear of adequacy, but also fears of potency. These categories are based on case studies and clinical reports from the groups that were run. They highlight different meanings of sexuality such as morality and affiliation that have become over-emphasized to the point of dysfunction.

Previously mentioned studies examined ties between sexuality and violence. Libby and Straus (1980) hypothesized that the relationship varies depending on the meaning of sex to the individual. For example, if the meaning of sex is warm and affectionate, the authors believe that high levels of sexual activity will be associated with low levels

of violence, whereas if sex means exploitation and dominance, sex and violence will vary directly. The meanings of sexual experience were determined here by factor analyzing sex items in a questionnaire to create three indices: a Sexual Activity Index, an Affectionate Sex Index, and a Dominant Sex Index. These scores were then combined so as to yield a "net warmth" measure called the Warm Sexual Activity Index. Their own comparison of the Sexual Activity Index with the Violent Acts Index did not yield a correlation coefficient different from zero, but when they used the Warm Sexual Activity Index they were able to plot a nearly linear relationship, especially for men. They had too few women in their study to achieve any meaningful results. The authors concluded that neglecting the meaning of sexual experience could account for the mixed evidence in the literature about the relationship between sex and violence.

Factor analysis has been used in two other studies to identify or confirm dimensions related to sexual experience. Farley, Nelson, Knight, and Garcia-Colberg (1977) collected data on sexual attitudes and behaviors, individual differences in stimulation-seeking, personality, and political orientation. A factor analysis yielded six factors for the females and five for the males. Three of the female factors related to sexuality: (1) a "sick" factor, including neurotic conflict over sex, sexual frustration, loss of sex controls; (2) a "Victorian" factor including sexual repression and frigidity; and (3) a "homosexuality" factor. (The names of these factors are written as described by the authors.) The three male factors that related to sexuality were: (1) a "sick" factor almost identical to that for females; (2) an

"unrepressed, heterosexual experience-seeking" factor; and (3) an "ambivalent homosexual extrovert" factor. Interestingly, the intravert-extrovert personality variable did not load on the sex factors contradicting Eysenck's (1971a) results discussed earlier. Meanings of sexual experience such as morality, control or lack of control, and pleasure can be inferred from these factors.

Nelson (1978) asked students to respond to fifty-six reasons for having sexual relations. Items included "Because it's a way of proving yourself," and "Because sex allows me to feel vulnerable," and subjects responded on a four-point scale from "Not important at all" to "Very important!" A factor analysis of the data yielded five factors: pleasurable stimulation, conformity-acceptance, personal love and affection, power, and recognition-competition. Four of these categories correspond closely to those listed by Apperson (1974); deference (conformity-acceptance), dominance (recognition-competition), affiliation (personal love and affection), and aggression (power).

The final study to be reviewed here was the springboard for the current study. Grater and Downing (currently under review) selected five meaning dimensions of sexual experience: morality, affiliation, pleasure, achievement, and dominance. They selected 476 adjectives from the Adjective Checklist (Gough, 1952), the Semantic Differential (Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum, 1957), and the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) and supplemented these by use of a thesaurus. The adjectives were scored by 302 unmarried college students as to whether or not each adjective described the students' personal meaning of sexual experience using the categories "yes," "no," or "maybe." In addition, at least

two of three trained judges agreed on which of the dimensions was represented by each adjective. Sixteen adjectives for each of the five dimensions were found to be useful in discriminating among the students. That is, they tended not to fall substantially in either the "yes" or "no" category. The Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II included these 80 adjectives. Four additional words that were uniformly scored "yes" were also included to be used as a "lie" scale for detecting invalid response sets. It was hypothesized that males would tend to rate words in the pleasure, achievement and dominance categories as descriptive, while females would tend to choose words in the morality and affiliation categories. Other variables studied included experienced versus non-experienced, and sex role (masculinity, femininity, and androgyny). The results confirmed the males' greater use of achievement adjectives and the females' greater use of affiliation adjectives although the other expected differences were not confirmed. Experienced subjects also tended to use more achievement adjectives whereas, for the non-experienced, sexual experience had a greater moral meaning. This study begins to provide evidence for the existence and utility of these categories, but the authors note that the adjectives must be more carefully evaluated to determine empirically if they are actually tapping the hypothesized meaning dimensions. It is from this suggestion that the current research evolved.

Although inferences from some studies are possible, the meaning of sexual experience has rarely been directly assessed as can be judged by the limited number of related studies discussed here. It is therefore necessary to rely more heavily on theories rather than research to

provide a foundation for this study. The following section reviews literature relating different conceptualizations of the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience after which it will be possible to clearly delineate the current research.

Theories on the Meaning of Sexual Experience

To review the preceding sections, it has been shown that sexology, as a research field, has appeared relatively recently. The history of sexuality indicates a shifting of meanings from early religious traditions, through the age of chivalry, the Victorian age, and the current scientific age. Research to this point has focused to a great extent on sexual attitudes and behaviors, and on the physiology of the human sexual response. Only in the past few years have attempts been made to study, empirically, the meaning of sexual experience. At the Nebraska Symposium on Motivation in 1973, William Simon (1974) said: "In no way that I can see is there a way of establishing the meaning of sexual pleasure . . ." (p. 77). Yet he felt that this meaning had been wrongfully neglected and was very important. He listed aggression, affection, competence, and eroticism as possible meanings.

Despite the paucity of research in this area, theorizing has long been active. Havelock Ellis (1936, 1942) wrote at the turn of the century that the sexual emotions of females are more closely associated with the level of the relationship than those of males. In addition he wrote: "The masculine tendency is to delight in domination, the feminine tendency is to delight in submission" (Ellis, 1942; p. 82). Whether this remains valid today or not is an empirical question that

can be answered by examining a dominance/submission meaning of sexual experience.

Gagnon (1977) describes sexual scripts, a construct that relates easily to meanings of sexual experience. The components of a sexual script include who one does sex with, what one does sexually, when (age or time of day), where, and why humans do approved or disapproved sexual things. All the components of scripts save the last have been included in the attitude and behavior studies. As for the "why," Gagnon lists the following reasons for having sex: having kids, pleasure, lust, fun, passion, love, variety, intimacy, rebellion, degradation, instinct/needs, exploitation, relaxation, achievement, and service. Of these, the first, "having kids," pertains relatively infrequently. The others are psychological meanings, and it remains to be verified whether they are all separate or somewhat intercorrelated. Gagnon notes that "in less than a century we have moved from sexuality as reproduction and a pivotal form of conduct in our judgements of good and evil to . . . sex as an expression of emotional intimacy, sex as interpersonal competence, and sex as passion and rebellion" (p. 408). In brief, he has included morality, affection, competence, and rebellion as meanings of sexual experience.

In an earlier article on sexual scripts, Gagnon (1974) notes that personal motives are embedded in these scripts. Young males, according to Gagnon, learn that their sexual script calls for male initiation and dominance. Gagnon and Simon (1973) include aggressiveness, achievement, conquest, and potency in the male script, and romance and attractiveness in the female script. They state, "Rarely do we turn from a

consideration of the organs themselves to the sources of meanings that are attached to them... . and the ways in which... . activities are integrated into larger social scripts and social arrangements where meanings and social behavior come together to create sexual conduct" (p. 5).

Sexual scripts can also be applied to Mosher's (1980) theoretical discussion of dimensions of involvement in human sexual response. He views involvement as a complex of psychological processes including the interaction of emotions, cognition, and actions described by three dimensions: sexual role enactment, sexual trance, and engagement with sex partner. The script here depends on the preferred ^{dimension} of involvement. Preference for sex role enactment results in playful, adventurous sexual experiences; preference for sexual trance results in very private, self-absorbed sexual experiences; and preference for engagement with partner results in romantic, affectionate sexual experiences. Mosher's theory is very complex and purposefully written to provoke research.

Using transactional analysis to examine life scripts, Steiner (1974) writes that sex role scripting creates gaps that limit our potential to become whole human beings. He concludes that men and women therefore feel incomplete without a partner of the opposite sex, implying an interpersonal meaning of sexual experience that might be termed fulfillment or completion. This notion of incompleteness leads Schwartz (1979) to conclude that androgynous humans, as described by Bem (1974), are healthier emotionally. Schwartz believes fulfilling sexual relationships require androgyny but she adds pessimistically that this will require a significant cognitive restructuring in this society.

Looking further at sex differences, Tavris and Offir (1977) argue that "the sexual gap between men and women . . . is a matter of the two sexes attaching somewhat different meanings to the sexual act" (p. 60). One difference they note is that: "Women, more often than men, use sex to get love; men use love to get sex" (p. 68). Bardwick (1971) discovered that college women admitted accepting sex as the price of a romantic relationship, not participating in it because they physically enjoyed it. It is, in fact, rather common for the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience to be viewed as different for males than for females. Morris (1978) claims that females are more deeply committed to the relational aspects of sex, males to the recreational aspects. The author adds that this may explain some marital conflict. Gross (1978) writes that "Compared to women, men tend . . . to isolate sex from other aspects of heterosexual relating" (p. 92), and adds that men are socialized to goal-orientation, control and power, and aggression and violence as meanings of sex. Pleck (1976) states that two fundamental themes in the male sex role are stress on achievement and suppression of affect.

Reik (1960) contends that those who analyze heterosexual relations often fail to distinguish needs for affection from sexual desire and recognize that the first is stronger in women and the second is stronger in men. Meanings of sexual experience for men derive from the fact that "the sexual urge of the male has an aggressive and even a sadistic character, and the wish to intrude the female body amounts to a kind of forceful incursion . . ." (p. 118).

Several other authors have theorized on the interpersonal meanings of sexual experience. Wilson, Strong, Robbins, and Johns (1980) write that "sexual intercourse can be used to: show love, have children, give pleasure, receive pleasure, show tenderness, gain revenge, make a commitment, end an argument, gain acceptance, show rejection, prove masculinity/femininity, degrade someone, degrade yourself, touch or be touched. Sex can be used to keep a person interested in you, to relieve loneliness, to dominate another, to make yourself or another feel guilty, to relieve physical tension, to express liking or love" (p. 333-334). They make the claim that, with marriage, the motivation for a sexual relationship changes from ego gratification, including motives of conquest, aggression, and power, to a motivation for mutual personal gratification. They do not explain what it is about marriage that foments this change.

Observing the sexual revolution from a psychoanalytic viewpoint, Gershman (1978) laments that the "sex revolution is placing too much emphasis on achieving physiological-mechanical success" (p. 149) and adds "In healthy sexuality . . . the relationship is characterized by a measure of affection and mutuality, and a desire to obtain, as well as to give, pleasure" (p. 151). Here the competence, affiliation, and pleasure meanings of sexual experience are expressed in somewhat judgmental terms. Another psychoanalytical viewpoint, expressed by Chodorow (1976), is that "females' apparent romanticism is an emotional and ideological mask for their very real economic dependency" (p. 462). The masculine personality, resulting from much greater cross-parent feelings, comes to be founded more on repression of affect and denial of relational needs.

Gershman (1978) above put forth healthy sexuality as representative of mental health. Reich (1973) goes one step further regarding healthy sexuality as necessary to physiological health. He therefore decries the moralistic appraisal that views sexuality as an unfortunate concomitant of the preservation of the species. Rather than sexuality being a function of procreation, Reich contends that procreation is only one function of sexuality. Reich's contention that orgasms lead to tension reduction and are therefore necessary to physical health does not necessarily explain why intercourse is different from masturbation, but he presents a strong case for sexual gratification as opposed to sexual repression.

Operating from the constructs of symbolic interactionism, Gecas and Libby (1976) see sexual experiences as being created by sexual symbolism. They use the language of sexual interaction as symbolic evidence for four "identifiable and coherent philosophies or codes regarding sexual behavior: the traditional-religious, romantic, recreational, and utilitarian-predatory" (p. 37). The authors remark on the paradox that freeing sex from the constraints of religion and romance has elevated enjoyment to the role of primary requirement. Thus our attention has been focused on technique and mechanics, causing the character of sexual experience to be more like work than play. By freeing sex we are no longer able to take it lightly. Slater (1976) concurs, writing that "the use of an engineering term like 'adequacy' in relation to an aspect of pleasure exemplifies the American gift for turning everything into a task" (p. 85). The author's position becomes even more cynical with the argument that whereas women are able to love

older, ugly men, men tend to favor only specific females types which is interpreted as evidence that men do not really like women. Whether these rather negative espousals are valid, they raise the issue of sex as work as opposed to sex as play. Comfort (1976) describes the three human uses of sex as: sex for procreation, sex for intimacy, and sex as physical play. He refers to the latter two as relational sex and recreational sex respectively, and contends that contraception has, for the first time, separated the three. Foote (1976) further supports the notion of sex as play, adding that this meaning is not necessarily amoral because any kind of play generates its own morality and values.

One of the clearest, most cohesive lists of psychological dimensions of sexuality has been formulated by Mitchell (1972) for adolescents. Included are: (1) The need for intimacy: Sex behavior fosters an openness which facilitates intimacy at other levels; not the reverse as commonly believed. (2) The need for belonging: Included in Maslow's hierarchy and Murray's list of psychological needs, the need for belonging differs from the need for intimacy in that it does not have to be experienced directly. (3) The desire for dominance: This refers both to Fromm's need for dominance in daily living, and Adler's compensatory strivings resulting from feelings of inferiority. (4) The desire for submissiveness: Being submissive allows other needs such as intimacy to be met, especially for women. (5) Curiosity and competency motives. (6) Desire for passion and intensity: Everything about an adolescent's style is intense. Nothing is paced. (7) Identification and imitation: Exposure to the media not only presents models but can also be sexually

arousing in itself. (8) Rebelliousness and negative identity:

Although not believed by the author to be a major motive in adolescent sex, negative identity, as used by Erikson, describes a type of drive satisfaction obtained by engaging in behavior that is contrary to what is desired or expected.

The above model is excellent but it must be added that adolescents are in a transitory phase of life and their sexual motives may be very changeable. Schoof-Tams, Schlaegel, and Walczak (1976) present a cognitive-developmental model of sexual morality between 11 and 16 years of age. They believe that eleven year olds tend to be more traditional, viewing sexuality as mainly for procreation and not to be engaged in until after marriage. By fifteen or sixteen, adolescents are much more permissive, seeing sexuality as governed by love and fidelity. The authors relate this to the transition from Kohlberg's conventional to post-conventional stage of morality which is also believed to rely on cognitive development. One wonders, however, if this might also be related to some biological changes occurring during this period making sexual needs and desires more a reality and less of a philosophical issue.

The above theories all hypothesize meanings of sexual experience, but Heath (1978) notes that few scientific studies of the psychological meaning of sexuality have been published. Heath goes on to challenge: "Not until researchers are willing to explore more systematically and as conscientiously the subjective psychological meanings of different sexual experiences, and not just their frequency or physiology, will we secure the information necessary to understand more objectively the

significance of sexuality to the psychological health and continued maturing of a person" (p. 475). This study begins to respond to that challenge. It attempts to lend supporting evidence to some of the psychological meanings of sexual experience that have been the focus of the above theories by devising an instrument to measure a person's preference for the different meanings. In addition, sex differences are examined in terms of whether males and females differentially describe their personal meanings of sexual experience.

Since the greatest portion of this study is the development of an instrument to measure the interpersonal meaning of sexual experience, it is important to review theories of instrument design and validation. The following sections outline relevant literature on factor analysis, the procedure to be used in designing the instrument, and on assessing reliability and validity of instruments.

Instrument Development: Factor Analysis

A major issue that arises in the literature on factor analysis is the number of subjects needed for a stable analysis. Comrey (1978) suggests using at least five times the number of variables as expected factors and at least 200 subjects. Other sources vary in the recommended number of subjects between five and ten subjects per item (Nunnally, 1978). As for the scale itself, Comrey (1978) suggests that a seven-point scale is most appropriate for factor analysis, and that the items should be selected to fit the hypothesized factor structure. There is some disagreement as to whether factor analysis is the best technique for data analysis. Loevinger (1948) prefers a technique of homogeneous

tests, claiming that it involves less work and more plausible hypotheses, and Nunnally (1978) warns that "one important reason for not beginning test construction with factor analysis is that such analyses are seldom highly successful" (p. 275). The advent of computer programs has nullified at least one of Loevinger's objections and has increased the popularity of factor analysis.

Instrument Development: Assessing Reliability and Validity

The form of reliability test to be used will be Cronbach's (1951) alpha which is the mean of the distribution of split-half reliability coefficients resulting from different splittings of a test. Cronbach criticized a simple split-half approach because the reliability coefficient obtained depends on how the test is split. He describes coefficient alpha as a lower bound to the "true reliability." Nunnally (1978) and Stanley (1971) support the use of coefficient alpha as a measure of internal consistency. Nunnally adds that reliability estimated from internal consistency is usually very close to reliability tested in other ways such as test-retest, and, for the early stages of research, suggests .70 as the criterion level for alpha.

Although most authors separate the issues of reliability and validity, Campbell and Fiske (1959) prefer to conceptualize them as lying along a continuum depending on the degree of independence of approaches used to define the coefficient. Validity requires the convergence of independent measures while reliability, as in the test-retest method, requires the convergence of non-independent measures (a test with itself). In this context, the split-half method of

reliability assessment is closer to validity than the test-retest method.

There is general agreement on the four types of validity described by the American Psychological Association (1954): content, predictive, concurrent, and construct. Some authors such as Cronbach (1971) prefer to join predictive and concurrent validity in their discussions since both are criterion-oriented validities differing only in their time frame. Predictive validity relies on the correlation that the test scores will have with subsequent criterion measures, while concurrent validity examines the relationship between the test score and criterion scores obtained at the same time.

Content validity indicates the basis for claiming the representativeness of the test content. Nunnally (1978) sees a successful factor analysis as providing evidence for content validity. Construct validity has received a lot of attention in the literature, and is critical to groundbreaking research such as this. The APA (1954) defines construct validity as investigating what psychological qualities an instrument measures. Cronbach (1971) gives three procedures for confirming construct validity: (1) Correlational: Determine how people with high or low scores differ in everyday life or in the lab; (2) Experimental: Attempt to alter test performance by some controlled procedure; and (3) Logical analysis of content and scoring. Cronbach and Meehl (1955) regard factor analysis as a most important type of construct validation since it can be used explicitly to test hypotheses about constructs. Other procedures suggested by those authors include identifying differences between groups on the instrument and, again, studies of change after experimental intervention, for example, a sex education class.

Nunnally (1978) suggests three steps in construct validation to be followed in the given order. First, the domain of observables related to the construct should be specified. Second, the extent to which the observables tend to measure the same thing or several different things should be determined from empirical research and statistical analysis. Finally, studies of individual differences and/or controlled experiments should be performed to determine the extent to which supposed measures of the construct produce results which are predictable from highly accepted theoretical hypotheses concerning the construct. These suggestions will be followed in the proposed study.

The most comprehensive design for construct validation is Campbell and Fiske's (1959) multitrait-multimethod matrix wherein both convergent and discriminant validity are assessed. The authors explain that "any conceptual formulation of trait will usually include implicitly the proposition that this trait is a response tendency which can be observed under more than one experimental condition and that this trait can be meaningfully differentiated from other traits" (p. 100). Convergent validity is represented as the tendency to be observed under more than one condition and discriminant validity is represented as the ability to be meaningfully differentiated from other traits. Discriminant validity is, of course, impossible to prove as one can never test a presumed trait against all other traits.

The issue of construct validity ends here with a quote from Nunnally (1978): ". . . all this fuss about construct validity really boils down to something rather homespun--namely, *circumstantial*

evidence for the usefulness of a new measurement method" (p. 109). This study provides some evidence to support the usefulness of an instrument that assesses interpersonal meanings of sexual experience. The review of the literature having been concluded, the following section delineates the hypotheses that were tested in this study.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were examined in this research:

- (1) The interpersonal meaning of the sexual experience for college students can be categorized along the following dimensions: morality, dominance/submission, aggression, affiliation, and pleasure.
- (2) Males, on the average, score higher on the meaning dimensions of dominance/submission, aggression, and pleasure, while females, on the average, score higher on the dimensions of morality and affiliation.
- (3) When males and females are asked to rate the interpersonal meaning of the sexual experience for a typical member of the opposite sex, the resulting dimension scores will again yield higher average scores for males (as judged by females) on dominance/submission, aggression, and pleasure, and higher average scores for females (as judged by males) on morality and affiliation. These stereotypical views are expected to show greater differences in this cross-sex experiment than will be yielded by the results for hypothesis (2).

In addition to testing the above hypotheses, the reliability and validity of the newly devised instrument is assessed. The next chapter will more precisely explain the steps taken in creating and validating the instrument, and in testing the hypotheses listed above.

CHAPTER II METHOD

Subjects

All subjects in this research were students in General Psychology classes at the University of Florida who were expected to participate in psychological experiments as part of their course requirements. A total of over 700 students participated in the various stages of this research. Further demographic information about the students appears in the following chapter.

Procedure

Factor Analysis--Stage I

The first stage in this research was an attempt to confirm the existence of the hypothesized dimensions of meanings of sexual experience. The 84 adjectives identified by Grater and Downing (currently under review) as appropriate to the meaning of dimensions of morality, affiliation, pleasure, achievement, and dominance were adopted for use here. These adjectives were administered to 256 students who were directed to score each adjective along a seven-point scale. (See Appendix A for the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II.) Due to the number of subjects needed, the administration of the adjective list was conducted in large groups. This procedure was advantageous

in that it created an atmosphere of anonymity and increased confidentiality so that the students could feel more comfortable responding truthfully to the adjectives. The students were given the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II and were instructed to answer the three demographic questions. The directions for the adjective list were then read and students were given the opportunity to ask questions. They were then instructed to complete the adjective list. They were told to ask the administrator about any adjectives that they did not understand.

The data collected were then submitted to several factor analyses with the author manipulating the inclusion or exclusion of adjectives in the analysis and the number of factors requested in order to find the most meaningful factors both statistically and conceptually. The criteria levels for maintaining items were factor loadings of at least .40 on one factor and less than .30 on every other factor. In addition, oblique factor rotation was permitted as long as the correlation between factors was not substantially greater than .30 for any two factors. The specific results of these analyses are discussed in the next chapter.

Factor Analysis--Stage 2

After factor analyzing the data from the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II, a new list of adjectives was prepared using the retained items from that form and new ones that the author judged as fitting the emerging factors. The new questionnaire, the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III (MOSE), includes 70 adjectives. (See Appendix B for the MOSE adjective list.) The directions were retained from the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II. The MOSE was administered to 326 students following the same procedure

as was outlined above, and the data were again submitted to a factor analysis. The criteria described above for acceptability of items was once again applied. The factors that emerged were then analyzed as to male-female differences on the factor scores.

Validity Studies

Three studies were conducted to elicit data with regard to the validity of the MOSE adjective list. First, to ensure that students understood the meanings of the words being used, a sample of 67 students was asked to indicate for each adjective whether they didn't understand it at all, had some ideas as to what it meant, or knew what it meant.

A second study was conducted to test the MOSE's sensitivity to experimental intervention, and also to examine stereotyping of views of the opposite sex. Thirty males and thirty females were instructed to complete the MOSE. After they finished, they were given a second copy of the instrument and asked to complete it as they believed an average or typical member of the opposite sex would.

A final study was then conducted to compare scores on the MOSE with those on another instrument which purports to measure similar constructs. In this study, 37 males and 33 females completed the MOSE and Nelson's (1978) Sexual Functions Measure (SFM). (See Appendix C for the complete SFM.)

Instruments

The Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire, Forms II and III, were constructed for the purpose of this study. Both forms list a series of adjectives and ask the subject to indicate how closely each

adjective describes his or her personal meaning of sexual experience on a scale from 1 to 7. (See Appendices A and B.) As the analysis and validation of this instrument is the primary goal of this research, data pertaining to the reliability and validity of the final form, the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III (MOSE), will be detailed in the next chapter.

Nelson's (1978) Sexual Functions Measure (SFM) lists 56 reasons that people have given for having sexual relations. (See Appendix C.) The subject is asked to indicate, on a four-point scale, how important each reason is or would be to him or herself. Nelson's factor analysis yielded five factors which he labeled pleasurable stimulation, conformity-acceptance, personal love and affection, power, and recognition-competition. Forty-seven of the 56 reasons loaded acceptably on these factors, having loadings of at least .40 on one factor. Only seven reasons had additional loadings greater than .30 on any other factor.

There are some weaknesses in the factor analysis of Nelson's scale. First, a four-point scale is not considered sufficient for an adequate factor analysis. As noted previously, Comrey (1978) suggests the use of a seven-point scale. Comrey also suggests using at least five times the number of items as expected factors and at least 200 subjects. Nelson clearly meets the sample size criterion, testing 180 males and 215 females. He does not, however, meet the item number criterion. Although he begins with 56 items which would be acceptable for five factors, his final analysis includes only 47 of these. As a result, his last factor, recognition-competition, is fairly weak. It includes only four items, three of which load between .36 and .39 on a factor other than recognition-competition.

Despite these weaknesses, Nelson's scale will be used to assess the convergent validity of the MOSE. It appears to be the only instrument available which measures constructs similar to those of the MOSE, and Nelson's sample of college students is very similar to the sample used for the factor analysis of the MOSE in terms of sex, age, and ethnic group. Nelson's sample was comprised of 45.6 percent males as opposed to 38.0 percent for the MOSE. Both samples included a high proportion of college age students. The MOSE sample had 85.5 percent of the males and 94.6 percent of the females below age 22. For Nelson's sample the figures were 78.9 percent of the males and 90.7 percent of the females. For the MOSE, 93.6 percent of the males and 88.7 percent of the females were white. Nelson reported 89.4 percent of males and 87.4 percent of females as being white. Finally, as both samples were drawn from General Psychology classes at the University of Florida, they are probably similar in many other characteristics such as cultural values.

CHAPTER III RESULTS

Analysis of the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II

The preliminary stage in the development of the final MOSE adjective list was the analysis of the data collected on the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II. A total of 256 subjects completed the questionnaire and the data were submitted to a principal components analysis using a statistical package from the Biomedical Computer Programs: P-Series 1979 (Dixon and Brown, 1979). The hypothesis to be tested was that five factors would emerge matching the hypothesized dimensions of morality, affiliation, pleasure, achievement, and dominance. Several computer runs were used to vary the adjectives included in the analyses and to specify different numbers of factors so that a final analysis might provide the best fit of the adjectives into statistically and conceptually meaningful factors. A direct quartimin rotation, which is the oblique rotation recommended for this statistical package, was employed.

The analysis yielded four factors including 53 adjectives. The adjectives with their factor loadings appears in Table 1. The criteria used for acceptability of adjectives were that they (1) load on their primary factor at a level no less than .40, and (2) load on every other factor at a level lower than .30. In addition, an oblique rotation was

TABLE 1
Oblique Factor Loadings for the
Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III

Adjectives	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
inept	.67	.07	-.03	.19
frigid	.66	-.09	-.14	.06
timid	.64	.23	-.12	-.18
awkward	.62	-.05	-.28	-.07
inhibited	.62	.02	-.13	-.11
inadequate	.61	-.01	-.15	-.09
submissive	.60	-.07	.05	.30
futile	.57	.07	.19	-.19
infantile	.53	.07	.03	.08
flat	.51	-.07	-.00	-.12
evasive	.51	.02	.16	-.23
muted	.49	.10	.12	-.08
distant	.47	-.05	.10	-.40
distrustful	.48	-.13	.12	.00
offensive	.43	-.05	.23	-.23
honorable	-.08	.71	.08	-.08
proper	-.04	.70	.08	-.05
moral	.20	.69	-.21	.09
pure	.17	.65	-.16	.08
sincere	-.07	.64	-.14	.28
dignified	.08	.62	.28	-.13
righteous	.16	.62	.13	-.18
clean	-.09	.54	.19	.04
virtuous	.33	.52	.04	.08
correct	-.21	.50	.36	-.08
appropriate	-.28	.47	.12	.01
unselfish	-.11	.42	.03	.29
masterful	.05	-.06	.70	.14
victorious	.09	.04	.66	-.07
dominant	.07	-.23	.66	.15
winning	.07	.26	.63	-.06
mighty	-.14	.14	.62	-.14
demanding	.07	.25	.59	-.00
forceful	.27	-.25	.52	.18
capable	-.22	.21	.51	.17
potent	.02	.08	.51	.40
successful	-.21	.38	.50	.15
outgoing	-.09	.08	.50	.30
aggressive	.02	-.27	.44	.39

TABLE 1--Continued

Adjectives	Factors			
	1	2	3	4
titillating	.04	.15	.27	.63
erotic	.00	-.13	.31	.61
affectionate	-.10	.21	-.10	.60
ecstatic	.01	.18	.09	.60
amorous	.05	.14	-.01	.59
hot	-.02	-.21	.29	.42
uninhibited	-.22	-.17	.15	.39
fond	-.14	.35	.06	.38
remote	.41	.04	.16	-.46
imperfect*	.36	-.06	.05	-.32
contented*	-.26	.25	-.08	.35
demanding*	.44	-.02	.47	.07
fussy*	.45	.18	.26	-.17
yielding*	.25	.09	.22	.16

*Adjectives not retained for the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire-III

permitted with the restriction that no two factors correlate at a level substantially higher than .30. The factor intercorrelations are presented in Table 2. The criteria were not applied rigidly to

TABLE 2
Factor Intercorrelations for the
Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--II

Factors	1	2	3	4
1	1.00			
2	-.04	1.00		
3	.12	.14	1.00	
4	-.26	.07	.23	1.00

this list of adjectives since it was a first analysis. The word "aggressive," for example, was retained because of its high loading on Factor 3 (.44) despite a higher than desired loading on Factor 4 (.39).

Five adjectives of the 53 that remained in the final computer run were dropped. "Imperfect," "contented," and "yielding" were eliminated as they did not load highly enough on any factor. "Demanding" was eliminated since it loaded too closely on two factors; .44 on Factor 1 and .47 on Factor 3. "Fussy" was eliminated, although it met the criteria, because its factor had more than sufficient number of adjectives. The remaining list of 48 adjectives was then augmented by 22 new adjectives selected from Grater and Downing's original list of 476 words. Adjectives were added if they appeared, in the author's judgement, to conceptually fit one of the four factors. More adjectives were added

to the smaller factors than to the larger ones in an attempt to equalize the number of adjectives in each factor. These 70 adjectives make up the current Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III, and their analysis is described below.

Analysis of the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III

Sample Characteristics

The Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III (MOSE) was administered to 326 students. Table 3 gives the distribution of the sample by age for each sex. Table 4 gives the distribution of the sample by ethnic group for each sex. The majority of the sample was in the

TABLE 3
MOSE Factor Analysis Sample: Frequency Distribution--Age

Category	Absolute Frequency (M)	Absolute Frequency (F)	Relative Frequency* (M)	Relative Frequency* (F)	Cumulative Frequency* (M)	Cumulative Frequency* (F)
Seventeen	2	4	1.6	2.0	1.6	2.0
Eighteen	26	86	21.0	42.6	22.6	44.6
Nineteen	38	61	30.6	30.2	53.2	74.8
Twenty	23	33	18.5	16.3	71.8	91.1
Twenty-one	17	7	13.7	3.5	85.5	94.6
Twenty-two	9	2	7.3	1.0	92.7	95.5
Twenty-three	3	2	2.4	1.0	95.2	96.5
Twenty-four or Older	6	7	4.8	3.5	100.0	100.0
Totals	124	202	100.0	100.0		

*Percent

TABLE 4
MOSE Factor Analysis Sample:
Frequency Distribution -- Ethnic Group

Category	Absolute Frequency (M)	Absolute Frequency (F)	Relative Frequency* (M)	Relative Frequency* (F)	Cumulative Frequency* (M)	Cumulative Frequency* (F)
White	110	189	88.7	93.6	88.7	93.6
Black	6	6	4.8	3.0	93.5	96.5
Spanish	5	3	4.0	1.5	97.6	98.0
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>2.0</u>	100.0	100.0
Totals	124	202	100.0	100.0		

*Percent

typical college age level of 18 to 21 years, the male population being slightly older than the female. The ethnic group distribution shows that most of the subjects were white with a very small proportion representing Black, Spanish, and other groups.

Factor Analysis

The analysis involved here was the same as that described previously for the Meaning of Sexual Experience Questionnaire--III. After several computer runs, factor groupings were achieved that almost completely fit the desired criteria as described above. Fifty-four of the 70 adjectives were included in this final analysis and five factors emerged. Table 5 gives the oblique factor loadings of the 54 adjectives on the five factors and Table 6 gives the factor intercorrelations. All the adjectives fit the criteria of loading at least at the .40 level on their primary factor and only three load at more than .30 on a

TABLE 5
Oblique Factor Loadings for the
MOSE Adjective List

Adjectives	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
caring	.85	.06	-.01	-.02	-.07
warm	.83	.05	-.02	-.04	.04
kind	.81	.08	.10	.01	-.09
loving	.77	.03	-.01	.01	.06
sincere	.75	.05	-.05	.15	-.09
gentle	.70	.12	-.00	.11	-.11
affectionate	.64	-.13	-.04	-.04	.20
fond	.63	.04	.05	.11	.06
intimate	.59	-.17	-.03	.03	.28
trusting	.50	-.25	.21	.06	-.06
mature	.48	-.10	.24	.17	-.06
distant	-.05	.60	-.02	.00	.02
futile	.01	.59	.22	.04	-.19
evasive	-.07	.59	.15	.01	-.01
inadequate	.13	.58	-.26	-.23	.12
resentful	-.17	.58	.12	-.05	-.06
timid	.14	.57	-.36	.05	-.01
inhibited	-.01	.56	-.24	.15	.01
remote	.02	.55	.04	.16	-.01
disagreeable	-.02	.54	.18	-.08	-.13
flat	-.15	.54	-.03	.07	-.07
infantile	.03	.54	.04	-.10	.08
awkward	-.09	.53	-.37	.00	.15
frigid	-.18	.51	-.18	.07	-.05
inept	.09	.50	.04	-.10	-.22
distrustful	-.26	.48	-.02	-.10	.09
undesirable	-.26	.43	-.16	-.04	.07
daring	.08	.04	.70	-.18	.07
imaginative	.19	-.03	.64	-.15	.05
inventive	.06	-.13	.60	-.14	.13
determined	-.04	.25	.55	.11	.10
outgoing	.13	-.10	.54	.13	.01
victorious	-.12	.16	.53	.20	.28
assertive	-.00	-.03	.53	-.04	.07
capable	.14	-.27	.52	.09	-.10
winning	.03	.18	.49	.22	.25
mighty	-.06	.16	.49	.28	.35
successful	.06	-.17	.49	.25	.11

TABLE 5--Continued

Adjectives	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
proper	-.03	-.00	-.02	.79	-.09
moral	.07	-.13	-.27	.72	.06
pure	.11	-.04	-.24	.68	.14
dignified	.03	-.01	.07	.62	-.05
righteous	-.07	.14	.17	.62	-.02
clean	.18	-.13	.03	.59	-.04
correct	.09	-.19	.23	.59	-.13
honorable	.19	-.05	-.05	.56	-.09
virtuous	.10	.17	.03	.56	.05
hot	.11	-.10	.17	-.05	.59
forceful	-.08	.22	.19	-.11	.57
titillating	.10	-.14	-.12	.05	.57
erotic	-.00	-.21	.02	-.13	.52
aggressive	-.07	-.08	.28	-.16	.48
demanding	-.10	.22	.11	.06	.48
ecstatic	.15	.22	.21	.13	.46

second factor (intimate, timid, and awkward). Of the factor inter-correlations, only Factors 1 and 2, and Factors 1 and 4 correlate

TABLE 6
Factor Intercorrelations for the
MOSE Adjective List

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1	1.00				
2	-.32	1.00			
3	.13	-.09	1.00		
4	.32	-.03	.12	1.00	
5	.01	-.08	.24	-.01	1.00

higher than .30. The analysis is judged successful in that it so closely meets the pre-determined criteria and also in that the groups of adjectives are conceptually as well as statistically meaningful.

In addition to the oblique analysis, an orthogonal analysis was run to determine how well the factors would be maintained with no inter-correlations. The results, presented in Table 7, are very similar to those obtained in the oblique analysis. None of the words loads primarily on a factor that is different from the one ascertained in the oblique analysis. Although the factors are not as clearly differentiated as in the oblique analysis, an outcome that was anticipated due to the more restricted nature of the rotation, the differentiation is stronger than expected. Once again all the adjectives load at least at the .40 level on their primary factor, and only ten of the adjectives

TABLE 7
Orthogonal Factor Loadings for the
MOSE Adjective List

Adjectives	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
caring	.81	-.11	.03	.12	-.06
warm	.79	-.11	.04	.10	.05
kind	.79	-.09	.13	.15	-.09
loving	.74	-.13	.06	.13	.06
sincere	.74	-.10	-.00	.27	-.08
gentle	.68	-.02	.02	.22	-.11
fond	.62	-.09	.11	.21	.06
affectionate	.62	-.26	.05	.06	.21
intimate	.59	-.30	.07	.12	.28
trusting	.53	-.35	.24	.15	-.04
mature	.52	-.21	.27	.26	-.04
distant	-.12	.61	-.04	-.02	-.00
resentful	-.24	.60	.08	-.07	-.07
evasive	-.13	.59	.13	-.00	-.02
futile	-.04	.58	.17	.04	-.19
flat	-.20	.57	-.07	.04	-.09
inhibited	-.06	.57	-.24	.14	-.02
awkward	-.17	.56	-.36	-.03	.11
timid	.06	.56	-.36	.06	-.04
frigid	-.23	.56	-.21	.03	-.07
inadequate	.01	.55	-.26	-.22	.09
remote	.02	.54	.04	.16	-.02
disagreeable	-.08	.54	.13	-.08	-.13
infantile	-.05	.52	.03	-.10	.06
distrustful	-.32	.52	-.04	-.15	.07
inept	.02	.49	-.03	-.09	-.23
undesirable	-.32	.48	-.18	-.09	.04
daring	.08	-.01	.70	-.15	.10
imaginative	.20	-.10	.65	-.10	.08
inventive	.09	-.18	.62	-.11	.16
victorious	-.07	.14	.59	.19	.30
mighty	-.01	.13	.57	.27	.36
determined	-.02	.22	.56	.11	-.12
outgoing	.19	-.16	.56	.17	.03
winning	.06	.13	.56	.23	.26
assertive	.02	-.06	.54	-.03	.10
successful	.15	-.22	.54	.27	.13
capable	.21	-.32	.53	.13	-.06

TABLE 7--Continued

Adjectives	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
proper	.10	.01	.03	.78	-.09
moral	.18	-.13	-.19	.71	.04
pure	.20	-.05	-.15	.67	.13
dignified	.13	-.02	.12	.62	-.05
clean	.29	-.16	.08	.61	-.03
correct	.22	-.22	.27	.61	-.11
righteous	.03	.15	.21	.60	-.02
honorable	.28	-.08	-.01	.58	-.09
virtuous	.17	.15	.09	.56	.05
hot	.11	-.15	.29	-.04	.59
forceful	-.13	.19	.28	-.13	.56
titillating	.11	-.18	.01	.06	.55
erotic	-.01	-.23	.12	-.13	.52
aggressive	-.08	.11	.36	-.17	.49
demanding	-.12	.21	.20	.04	.47
ecstatic	.19	.28	.32	.15	.46
Variance Explained	6.134	6.024	5.133	4.615	2.643

load above .30 on a second factor. This provides further evidence for the statistical meaningfulness of the factors. The explained variances, shown in Table 7, indicate that four of the five factors are approximately equal in the amount of variance they explain, with the fifth factor being relatively less explanatory. Means, standard deviations, and maximum and minimum values for each of the 54 adjectives are given in Table 8. These data were used to determine whether any adjectives should be discarded as not useful in differentiating among people. For example, any adjective scored with all ones or all sevens would not have discriminated between people.

The five conceptually and statistically meaningful factors that emerged in this analysis coincided with several of the hypothesized factors of morality, affiliation, pleasure, achievement, and dominance. Factor 1 describes an "affiliation" dimension and was predicted as was Factor 3, the "achievement" dimension, and Factor 4, the "moral" dimension. Factor 2, as it emerged in this study, contains adjectives with a very negative tone. It is labeled "inadequate/undesirable" and it does not coincide with any of the hypothesized factors. Factor 5, the least strong of the factors in terms of number of items and the amount of variance explained, is the most difficult to label. It appears to be somewhat of a combination of the hypothesized pleasure and dominance dimensions and, as such, is tentatively labeled "erotic dominance."

Reliability and Validity Analysis

Before a new instrument can be acceptable, evidence must be accumulated as to its reliability and validity. Reliability of the factors that emerged from the analysis of the MOSE data was assessed

TABLE 8
Descriptive Statistics for the
MOSE Adjective List

Adjectives	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
caring	6.3	1.0	2	7
warm	6.3	1.0	1	7
kind	6.1	1.0	1	7
loving	6.3	1.0	1	7
sincere	6.1	1.2	1	7
gentle	6.0	1.0	2	7
affectionate	6.4	0.8	3	7
fond	5.8	1.3	1	7
intimate	6.0	1.2	2	7
trusting	5.9	1.2	1	7
mature	5.9	1.0	2	7
distant	2.4	1.3	1	7
futile	2.3	1.3	1	6
evasive	2.8	1.4	1	7
inadequate	2.3	1.2	1	7
resentful	2.1	1.2	1	7
timid	3.0	1.3	1	7
inhibited	2.8	1.5	1	7
remote	2.8	1.6	1	7
disagreeable	2.3	1.2	1	7
flat ^{2.2}	2.2	1.2	1	7
infantile	2.2	1.3	1	7
awkward	2.5	1.2	1	6
frigid	2.1	1.3	1	7
inept	2.2	1.2	1	7
distrustful	2.3	1.3	1	7
undesirable	1.9	1.1	1	7
daring	4.8	1.5	1	7
imaginative	5.2	1.4	1	7
inventive	4.6	1.5	1	7
determined	4.8	1.6	1	7
outgoing	5.1	1.4	1	7
victorious	3.7	1.9	1	7
assertive	4.5	1.4	1	7
capable	5.9	1.1	1	7
winning	4.2	1.8	1	7
mighty	3.8	1.7	1	7
successful	5.4	1.4	1	7

TABLE 8--Continued

Adjectives	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
proper	4.6	1.7	1	7
moral	4.8	1.7	1	7
pure	4.4	1.8	1	7
dignified	5.0	1.5	1	7
righteous	3.6	1.8	1	7
clean	5.6	1.5	1	7
correct	4.9	1.5	1	7
honorable	5.0	1.7	1	7
virtuous	3.9	1.7	1	7
hot	5.4	1.2	1	7
forceful	3.5	1.7	1	7
titillating	4.9	1.5	1	7
erotic	5.0	1.6	1	7
aggressive	4.5	1.4	1	7
demanding	3.9	1.7	1	7
ecstatic	5.3	1.3	1	7

by use of Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha, the average of all possible split-half reliability coefficients. The reliability coefficients calculated for the factors are .91 for affiliation, .86 for inadequate/undesirable, .84 for achievement, .85 for moral, and .69 for erotic dominance. With the exception of the last dimension, all the factors easily meet Nunnally's (1978) suggested criterion level of .70.

The issue of validity was approached from several directions. A preliminary step was the administration of the list of 70 adjectives to 67 students who were asked to categorize the words as "don't understand at all," "have some idea," and "know what it means!" Only two of the 70 words were scored as "don't understand at all" by more than two students. "Amorous" was not understood by six of the students and "titillating" was not understood by nine of the students. This survey indicates that the adjective list does not present definitional problems that would be severe enough to interfere with the validity of the instrument.

Evidence for the content validity comes from the fact that the adjectives themselves were selected according to conceptual guidelines. In addition, the factor analysis supports three of the five hypothesized dimensions: affiliation, morality, and achievement. The other two factors, although not predicted, provide some evidence of their validity in the conceptual cohesiveness of the adjectives they include. Therefore it can be concluded that the factor analysis supports the content validity and, to some extent, the construct validity of the instrument.

Further experimentation was conducted to assess convergent validity. Convergent validity is an element of construct validity described by Campbell and Fiske (1959) as relating to the tendency of a trait to be observed under more than one condition. Seventy students, 37 males and 33 females, completed both the MOSE adjective list and Nelson's (1978) Sexual Functions Measure (SFM) which appears to measure some of the same constructs as the MOSE adjective list. Nelson's factor analysis of the SFM yielded five factors which he labeled pleasurable stimulation, conformity and acceptance, personal love and affection, power, and recognition and competition. To support the convergent validity of each of these instruments the following correlations between MOSE and SFM dimensions were predicted: affiliation (MOSE) with personal love and affection (SFM), achievement (MOSE) with power (SFM), achievement (MOSE) with recognition and competition (SFM), and erotic dominance (MOSE) with pleasurable stimulation (SFM). The SFM does not appear to have any factors that are analogous to the MOSE's moral factor. Also, while the MOSE's inadequate/undesirable factor may be related to the SFM's conformity and acceptance factor, the relationship does not appear to be straightforward enough to be hypothesized here. The correlation coefficients between the factor scores from the two measures appear in Table 9 as they were calculated for the entire sample. The correlations for males alone appear in Table 10, and those for females alone appear in Table 11.

The affiliation (MOSE) and personal love and affection (SFM) factors correlate highly for the entire sample but this is apparently due mostly to the extremely high correlation for males (.77). The females'

TABLE 9
MOSE and SFM Factor Correlations-- Entire Sample

N = 70	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Pleasurable Stimulation	-.24*	.04	.25*	-.32**	.34**
Conformity & Acceptance	-.42***	.24*	-.07	-.21	.10
Personal Love & Affection	.57***	-.12	.11	.44***	.14
Power	-.04	.20**	.30*	.10	.30*
Recognition & Competition	-.23	-.11	.30*	-.16	.32**

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

TABLE 10
MOSE and SFM Factor Correlations-- Males Only

N = 37	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Pleasurable Stimulation	-.30	.26	.07	-.39*	.16
Conformity & Acceptance	-.43**	.25	-.01	-.26	.11
Personal Love & Affection	.77***	-.16	.24	.56***	.24
Power	-.10	.43**	.22	.13	.25
Recognition & Competition	-.07	-.01	.25	-.20	.29

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

TABLE 11
MOSE and SFM Factor Correlations-- Females Only

N = 33	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Pleasurable Stimulation	-.04	-.14	.32	-.17	.42*
Conformity & Acceptance	-.28	.31	.01	.00	.02
Personal Love & Affection	.24	-.10	.07	.22	.15
Power	.02	.01	.38*	.06	.34
Recognition & Competition	-.31	.24	.28	-.00	.33

*p < .05

correlation does not approach significance. The second predicted correlation between achievement (MOSE) and power (SFM) is supported for females at a moderate level but not for males. The correlation between achievement (MOSE) and recognition and competition (SFM) is statistically significant but not very strong for the entire sample and the correlations for males and females are about equal to that of the entire sample although the statistical significance does not hold for either subgroup. The correlation between erotic dominance (MOSE) and pleasurable stimulation (SFM) is supported for females but not for males. Of all the correlations computed between factors of the MOSE and SFM, none is significant for both males and females. These results offer only weak support for the convergent validity of the MOSE except in certain cases for subsets of the sample.

Two other analyses aimed at supporting the construct validity of the MOSE were a comparison of between group differences on the instrument and a study of change related to experimental intervention. Both of these approaches to construct validation are suggested by Cronbach and Meehl (1955), and the results of these experiments follow.

Sex Differences in the Meaning of Sexual Experience

The data from the 326 subjects participating in the factor analysis study were examined as to the male-female differences in the mean values for the five factor scores. It was hypothesized that males would score higher on the achievement and erotic dominance dimensions while females would score higher on the affiliation, inadequate/undesirable, and moral dimensions. T-tests were performed and the results are presented in Table 12. A significant difference between variances of the two groups occurs on the inadequate/undesirable dimension. Therefore, the t-statistic used in this case was a two-sample statistic. For the other dimensions, the t-statistic was computed using a pooled variance estimate from the two groups as their variances were assumed to be equal. The differences between the factor scores of males and females are significant for two of the dimensions, affiliation and erotic dominance. The difference between the mean scores on the achievement dimension approaches significance, while the inadequate/undesirable and moral dimensions yield insignificant differences. In all the dimensions, with the exception of inadequate/undesirable, the differences are in the predicted direction. Note that due to the large number of statistical tests being conducted, .01 has been adopted as the criterion level for

TABLE 12
Sex Differences for MOSE Factor Analysis Sample

Factor	Sex	Mean	t-Statistic	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Affiliation	Male	64.6	-4.09**	8.8	27	77
	Female	68.4		7.8	37	77
Inadequate/ Undesirable	Male	38.3	0.21	10.0	16	70
	Female	38.0		12.7	16	78
Achievement	Male	53.9	2.39*	9.7	31	76
	Female	51.0		10.9	19	72
Moral	Male	40.8	-1.75	9.5	10	57
	Female	42.8		10.4	11	63
Erotic Dominance	Male	34.0	3.22**	5.7	21	48
	Female	31.7		6.3	14	48

Note: N = 124 males, 202 females

*p < .05

**p < .001

statistical significance throughout the research to avoid interpreting chance differences as significant.

Sex differences were also analyzed for the data resulting from the comparison of the MOSE and the SFM. A MANOVA was performed to examine the effect due to sex on the ten dimensions of the two instruments. Using Pillai's Trace as the F approximation, the MANOVA is found to be significant; $F(10,59) = 2.70$, $p < .01$. The results of the ten ANOVA's appear in Table 13. No male-female significant differences are supported on the MOSE dimensions. The magnitude of these differences are almost identical to those computed for the factor analysis sample and the differences are in the same direction for all five dimensions. The p-values are lower for this sample due to the smaller sample size. On the SFM factors, males score significantly higher on the pleasurable stimulation, conformity and acceptance, and recognition-competition dimensions. The females' higher score on the personal love and affection dimension approaches significance ($F = 4.47$, $p = .045$).

For the final experiment in this research program, 30 males and 30 female students completed the MOSE adjective list. After they had finished they were given another copy and asked to complete it again but this time as they believed an average or typical member of the opposite sex would. The purposes of this study were twofold. First, it was a further study of construct validation in the sense of determining whether the instrument was sensitive to experimental intervention. Secondly, this was an attempt to ascertain whether the hypothesized male-female differences, which were only weakly supported by the previous data, might be amplified in people's perceptions of the opposite sex.

TABLE 13
Sex Differences for MOSE and SFM Comparison Study

Factor	Sex	Mean	F-Statistic	p-value
Affiliation	Male	63.7	3.71	.058
	Female	67.7		
Inadequate/ Undesirable	Male	38.4	0.00	.990
	Female	38.4		
Achievement	Male	51.7	2.29	.135
	Female	47.8		
Moral	Male	40.3	1.24	.269
	Female	43.4		
Erotic Dominance	Male	32.0	1.39	.243
	Female	30.1		
Pleasurable Stimulation	Male	35.6	11.30	.001
	Female	29.7		
Conformity & Acceptance	Male	17.8	13.37	.001
	Female	14.2		
Personal Love & Affection	Male	28.0	4.17	.045
	Female	30.2		
Power	Male	17.1	.02	.885
	Female	16.9		
Recognition- Competition	Male	7.8	8.36	.005
	Female	6.3		

Note: N = 37 males, 33 females

Table 14 presents the male and female means both for self-reports and for perceptions of the opposite sex, and Table 15 presents the results of MANOVA's used to test for significant differences between the means. The first MANOVA compares males and females as they scored themselves. The results are completely analogous to the male-female

TABLE 14
Mean Scores for Self and
Perception of Opposite Sex Study

	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Males' views of selves	65.6	38.1	53.4	42.4	34.9
Males' views of females	60.2	49.2	48.8	42.7	32.4
Females' views of selves	70.5	36.5	50.8	46.9	27.1
Females' views of males	52.8	48.5	61.0	36.8	39.4

Note: N = 30 males, 30 females

comparisons reported in the earlier analyses. (See Tables 12 and 13.) All the differences found here are in the same direction as those reported previously. The magnitude of these differences also tends to parallel those reported above with the exception of the erotic dominance factor where there is a larger difference. Again the only dimension where the differences do not occur in the predicted direction is the inadequate/undesirable dimension and, as before, the difference here is the least of any dimension.

TABLE 15
Differences in Perception of Self and Opposite Sex

	MANOVA F/p	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Males vs. females	8.15 .0001	4.9 9.12 .004	1.6 0.43 .517	2.6 1.33 .254	4.5 5.42 .023	7.8 29.42 .0001
Males' view of females vs. females' view of males	12.69 .0001	7.4 11.27 .001	.7 0.05 .820	12.2 29.72 .0001	5.9 10.80 .002	7.0 34.10 .0001
Males' self vs. males' view of females	4.78 .001	5.4 7.88 .007	11.1 17.44 .0001	4.6 5.16 .027	.3 0.03 .859	2.5 5.07 .028
Females' self vs. females' view of males	36.16 .0001	17.7 82.79 .0001	12.0 15.72 .0002	10.2 17.04 .0001	10.1 24.80 .0001	12.3 67.16 .0001
Males' self vs. females' view of males	15.08 .0001	12.8 35.47 .0001	10.4 13.77 .0005	7.6 10.92 .0002	5.6 8.88 .004	4.5 14.05 .0004
Females' self vs. males' view of females	12.42 .0001	10.3 36.96 .0001	12.7 19.28 .0001	2.0 0.78 .38	4.2 5.14 .027	5.3 13.35 .0006

Note: N = 30 males, 30 females

A second MANOVA analyzes the differences between the males' perceptions of females and the females' perceptions of males. Somewhat more meaningful differences are noted here. In all cases except, once again, for inadequate/undesirable, differences in perceptions of the opposite sex are in the same direction as differences in self-reports. The "view of opposite sex" differences are greater than the self-report differences for three of the dimensions, however, and at least in one case, achievement, the difference is substantially greater.

The next two MANOVA's compare self-reports to perceptions of the opposite sex to ascertain how much difference people perceive between the opposite sex and themselves. Some large differences appear. Males score themselves significantly higher on affiliation and somewhat higher on achievement and erotic dominance. They score females as substantially higher on inadequate/undesirable. There is no difference on the moral dimension. Females score themselves and typical males substantially differently on all dimensions. They score themselves higher on affiliation and moral, and they score males higher on inadequate/undesirable, achievement, and erotic dominance.

The last two MANOVA's in Table 14 compare the scores males and females gave themselves to the scores given them by the opposite sex. Substantial differences occur on the affiliation and inadequate/undesirable dimensions. Males perceive themselves as very much higher on affiliation and much lower on inadequate/undesirable than females perceive them to be. Females, likewise, perceive themselves as much higher on affiliation and much lower on inadequate/undesirable than males perceive them to be. Several other significant differences appear in this MANOVA although

the magnitude is not as great. Females perceive males higher on the achievement and erotic dominance dimensions and lower on the moral dimensions than the males perceive themselves. Males perceive females higher on the erotic dominance dimension and somewhat lower on the moral dimension than the females perceive themselves.

This study produced a great deal of supporting evidence for the construct validity of the MOSE. Except for the inadequate/undesirable dimension, male-female differences again occur in the predicted direction. Whereas differences in the self-reports may not be as great as was expected, these predicted differences clearly occur in the students' perceptions of the opposite sex. The results also support the sensitivity of the instrument to experimental intervention. A summary of the reliability and validity evidence follows.

Summary

The results of the analyses described above tend to support the reliability and validity of the Meaning of Sexual Experience adjective list. The validity of the five meaning dimensions is supported by their frequent appearance in the theoretical literature and by the conceptual cohesiveness of the adjectives within each dimension. Statistically, the validity is supported by the factor analysis and by the tendency of the sex differences in the factor scores to be very consistent across different studies. For four out of the five factors, the sex differences in the factor scores consistently occur in the predicted direction. The validity is further supported by showing the instrument to be sensitive to experimental manipulation. Students

completing the MOSE first as self-reports and then as their perception of a typical member of the opposite sex changed their factor scores significantly. The reliability of the instrument is supported by the computation of Cronbach's coefficient alpha. These reliability coefficients easily meet the criterion level of .70 for four of the factors, and fall just short of the criterion for the fifth. Other forms of validity need to be assessed before the usefulness and meaningfulness of this instrument is completely understood. The following chapter reviews the empirical evidence described here and suggests future directions in the continual process of evaluating the validity of the MOSE adjective list.

CHAPTER IV DISCUSSION

This research was based on the premise that sexual experience has different meanings to different people. The literature abounds with essays theorizing about the nature of these meanings, how they changed through historical eras, and how they are differentially salient to males and females. These hypotheses appear to be accepted not only by psychologists, but by the general populace. Witness the popularity of literary works such as Erica Jong's Fear of Flying (Jong, 1973) wherein the heroine attempts to fulfill her sexual fantasies by overcoming the restrictive meaning that sexual experience has for her. Then there is Norman Mailer's Prisoner of Sex (Mailer, 1971), a male's graphic description of sexual experiences as war: ". . . there was a subterranean war of the will when a man and a woman made love. . . ." (p. 151). The line of research begun here is important precisely because attention is being focused on sexuality, perhaps to a greater extent than ever before, and the meanings of sexual experience are changing for males and females.

When the meaning of sexual experience for an individual can be understood, the interpersonal transactions used to have or avoid the experience and the motivations behind the individual's behaviors will become clearer. Yet sexual experience is just one of numerous interpersonal experiences that a human being encounters in a lifetime.

These other experiences may also have different meanings. The same work experience may have an overarching meaning of competence or achievement to one person and a meaning of submission to another. It is possible that the meanings isolated in this research would be equally applicable to other spheres of life and, if this is so, a person's meaning of sexual experience may be only one outgrowth of an overall personality trait. For example, a person who is largely motivated by a need to achieve may experience every interpersonal encounter, sexual or otherwise, in terms of achievement. If this is true then future research may wish to focus more on the general interpersonal style rather than focus specifically on the sexual experience. Until there is evidence that meanings of one type of experience can be subsumed under a more general category, however, it remains useful to focus on the one specific type of experience.

What follows is a review of the empirical evidence for some meanings of sexual experience as provided by this research. The initial section discusses the dimensions that emerged from the principal components analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the differential descriptive power that these meanings have for males and females. The sample characteristics are then reviewed to assess the generalizability of the results. The final two sections present implications of this research for counseling and clinical psychology, and suggestions for future investigations into the meaning of sexual experience.

The Interpersonal Meanings of Sexual Experience

To gather data concerning people's behaviors and attitudes with respect to sexual experiences is a relatively simple task. Of course,

due to the private nature of sexuality, complete confidentiality must be assured but, once that issue is resolved, it is easy for someone to delineate his or her behaviors due to their concrete and observable nature, and almost as easy for them to delineate their attitudes, which are less concrete but have usually been clarified in the individual's own mind. It is not as easy for the individual to report on the meanings of his or her sexual experience. Meanings are far more abstract than attitudes or behaviors and more difficult to define or delineate. The effort in this research has been to develop a concrete and relatively easy and nonthreatening task that would uncover the subject's meaning of sexual experience. The approach chosen, scoring adjectives on their descriptive accuracy, is a somewhat indirect method for elucidating meanings but the results seem to indicate that meanings can be derived in this manner.

Two disclaimers are necessary before the meanings that emerged in this study are discussed. First, the meanings that emerged clearly depended on the adjectives selected for use. It would seem unlikely that all possible meanings have been exhausted by this list. Secondly, no claim is being made that these meanings are stable or universal. Meanings appear to be culture bound. The adoption of this methodology for attempts at understanding meaning dimensions in other cultures would be more useful than a rigid adherence to the dimensions supported here.

The five groups of adjectives that emerged from the MOSE adjective list appear to represent five different meanings that sexual experience may have for individuals. To simplify the discussion of these dimensions

each has been given a brief and hopefully descriptive label: affiliation, inadequate/undesirable, achievement, moral, and erotic dominance. Anyone using these labels is encouraged to refer often to the list itself (Table 5) to retain a more complete understanding of the meaning described by that list. It seems clear that one or two adjectives cannot accurately describe ten.

The first dimension that emerged from the principal components analysis has been labeled "affiliation." It includes eleven adjectives: caring, warm, kind, loving, sincere, gentle, fond, affectionate, intimate, trusting, and mature. A person finding these adjectives descriptive would appear to be perceiving sexual experience as a very positive interpersonal encounter. "Caring," "loving," and "affectionate" describe an emotional tone, "gentle" and "kind" seem to describe the physical interaction, while "intimate" and "trusting" imply a feeling of safety and a level of respect for the other person. Sexual experience for this individual has a meaning of emotional and physical responsiveness and involvement in the context of a trusting relationship. One gets a clear picture of the type of sexual relationship described by these adjectives and this picture, in addition to the statistical cohesiveness of these words, supports a meaning dimension often theorized in the literature.

The second dimension, labeled "inadequate/undesirable," includes sixteen adjectives: distant, resentful, evasive, futile, flat, inhibited, awkward, timid, frigid, inadequate, remote, disagreeable, infantile, distrustful, inept, and undesirable. This meaning is almost diametrically opposite to the first. Rather than the affiliation dimension's emotional

tone of "caring," "loving," and "affectionate," the tone here is described as "distant," "resentful," "flat," and "disagreeable." Physically, the experience is perceived as "futile," "inhibited," "awkward," "timid," "frigid," "inadequate," and "inept." Whereas the affiliation factor includes "mature," this factor includes "infantile." While the affiliation factor describes the experience as "trusting" and "intimate," this factor describes it as "distrustful" and "remote." A person using these adjectives to describe their meaning of sexual experience is perceiving it very negatively. Such a person might have great difficulty in developing close interpersonal relationships as the sexual aspects of those relationships would more likely lead to distance than intimacy.

The third dimension, labeled "achievement," includes eleven adjectives: daring, imaginative, inventive, victorious, mighty, determined, outgoing, winning, assertive, successful, and capable. Conceptually, this is an extremely cohesive group of words. Taken out of context they might be thought to describe a great athlete or highly successful businessman. The person selecting these adjectives as highly descriptive would appear to perceive sexual experiences as a game or a competitive interpersonal encounter. Achievement is noted in adjectives such as "successful" and "capable" but this dimension is more complex than that. It includes a dominance facet suggested by "victorious," "mighty," and "winning." It also requires a creative and persevering strategy described as "daring," "imaginative," "inventive," "determined," "outgoing," and "assertive." It would not be totally facetious to describe this as the "football coach" meaning of sexual experience.

It is of note again how different this meaning is from the preceding two. The first factor seemed to describe a closeness and a balance; a perception of two people sharing an experience. The second factor indicates a distance; a perception of two people losing closeness through an experience. This third factor does not imply two people moving together or apart but, rather, one person moving against another. In essence, the first three factors could be viewed as analogous to Karen Horney's three modes of interaction: moving towards others, moving away from others, and moving against others.

The fourth dimension, labeled "moral," includes nine adjectives: proper, moral, pure, dignified, clean, correct, righteous, honorable, and virtuous. This factor emerged early in the analysis of the first form of the instrument and can be seen as being almost identical to the second factor listed in Table 1. It was the most consistent and persevering factor in the continual analysis of the adjective lists. "Moral" was selected as the label for this factor because the adjectives convey an image of a person with a very reserved, almost religious, meaning of sexual experience. The element of play is not included in this meaning and, in fact, neither is the element of affection. A person with a strong commitment to participating in sexual experiences only within the context of a marriage or long-term relationship might score high on this factor.

The final factor, "erotic dominance," includes seven adjectives: hot, forceful, titillating, erotic, aggressive, demanding, and ecstatic. Since a principal components analysis extracts factors in diminishing order of strength, this factor is statistically the weakest of the five.

Conceptually, this factor is also relatively weaker. Four of the adjectives, "hot," "titillating," "erotic," and "ecstatic" denote a highly sensual and emotional meaning of sexual experience. The other three, "forceful," "demanding," and "aggressive," were expected to load on the achievement factor and yet their loadings on that factor are low (.19, .11, and .28 respectively). Responding to the four sensual adjectives alone, one gets a sense of sex as play or pleasure. But the other three adjectives suggest that the pleasure is somewhat based on dominance. What distinguishes this factor from the achievement factor is the intense sensuality it includes. The dominance described here is related to sensual pleasure whereas the dominance in the achievement factor is related to winning. Although one might hesitate to interpret this factor with as much confidence as the others due to its relative weakness, both conceptually and statistically, it is not clear that it should be disregarded entirely. Future research may be able to clarify this factor by adding more adjectives to the instrument, possibly resulting in this factor splitting into two more cohesive factors.

To this point the analysis has centered on an explication of the adjectives within each factor. The images that have been drawn are simplistic. A more complete understanding of a person's meaning of sexual experience would result from an analysis of the profile of scores on all five factors. For example, an individual scoring high on moral and also scoring high on affiliation would have a very different meaning of sexual experience compared to one who scores high on moral and high on inadequate/undesirable. This is due to the non-emotional tone of

the moral factor being augmented by two factors of opposite emotional tones. Similarly, a high score on erotic dominance would be interpreted differently if it were associated with a high affiliation score than if it were associated with a high achievement score. Of course, the complexity of interpretations multiplies as more factors are included in the analysis.

It is concluded from this discussion that the instrument devised for this research has successfully elicited several meanings of sexual experience. Profiles of individuals' scores on the five dimensions can yield clues as to their personal meanings. This leads to an examination of average responses of males and females in an attempt to validate theoretical differences.

Sex Differences in the Meanings of Sexual Experience

Male-female stereotypes would predict clear differences on the dimensions of meaning being discussed. They would predict higher female scores on the affiliation, inadequate/undesirable, and moral dimensions, and higher male scores on the achievement and erotic dominance dimensions. Three samples of college students have been compared in this research. The factor analysis sample (Table 12) included 124 males and 202 females, the MOSE-SFM comparison sample (Table 13) included 37 males and 33 females, and the self-perception versus perception by opposite sex sample (Table 14) included 30 males and 30 females. Table 16 allows for the comparison of mean differences in the three studies. Females scored higher on affiliation and moral, males on inadequate/undesirable, achievement, and erotic dominance. With the exception of inadequate/

TABLE 16
Mean Differences Between Male and Female Factor Scores

	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Factor Analysis	3.8	0.3	2.9	2.0	2.3
MOSE-SFM	4.0	0.0	3.9	3.1	1.9
Perception of Opposite Sex	4.9	1.6	2.6	4.5	7.8
Total/(Higher scoring sex)	4.0 (females)	0.4 (males)	2.8 (males)	2.3 (females)	2.8 (males)

undesirable these differences are in the predicted direction. The differences on the inadequate/undesirable dimension were the smallest and basically indicated no difference between the sexes. To some extent, then, these results support theoretical differences. Not only are the directions of the differences for the three samples completely consistent within dimensions, but the magnitude of these differences is fairly consistent as well.

To better understand the sex differences, a profile of scores on all five factors should be examined. Since the factors include different numbers of adjectives, it is not possible to compare scores across factors unless they are standardized. This is accomplished by dividing the scores by the number of adjectives in the factor. Table 17 shows the results of this standardization. Affiliation is scored highest by both sexes and inadequate/undesirable is scored lowest. The other three factors seem to cluster somewhat although their ordering is different for the two sexes. Overall, there appear to be as many

TABLE 17
Standardized Mean Scores

	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Males	5.87	2.39	4.85	4.56	4.83
Females	6.24	2.37	4.60	4.81	4.43
Differences	0.37	0.02	0.25	0.25	0.40

Note: N = 191 males, 265 females

similarities as there are differences between the sexes in their factor profiles. As these results were not submitted to a statistical analysis, any inferences drawn from them would be highly tentative.

The most intriguing data in these studies are the perceptions of the opposite sex. Table 18 includes the means for perception of the opposite sex from Table 14 rewritten in standardized form. The differences between Table 17 and Table 18 are remarkable although, again, inferences described here are speculative. Females appear to perceive the male profile as placing the greatest importance on the erotic dominance and achievement meanings, less importance on affiliation, followed by moral and inadequate/undesirable. They score the males higher than five and one-half on a seven-point scale on both erotic dominance and achievement. Males appear to perceive affiliation as the most important meaning to females, and score it at about the same level as females score erotic dominance and achievement for males. The order for the remaining dimensions is moral, erotic dominance, achievement,

TABLE 18
Perception of the Opposite Sex

	Affiliation	Inadequate/ Undesirable	Achievement	Moral	Erotic Dominance
Males' View of Females	5.47	3.08	4.44	4.74	4.63
Females' View of Males	4.80	3.03	5.55	4.09	5.63
Differences	0.67	0.05	1.11	0.65	1.00

Note: N = 30 males, 30 females

and inadequate/undesirable. The differences between the perceptions of opposite sex scores (Table 18) seem to be far greater than differences in the self-report scores (Table 17).

There is apparently a great difference between students' perceptions of self and the opposite sexes' perceptions of them as evidenced by Tables 14 and 15. Males and females each perceive themselves as being higher on affiliation and each perceive the opposite sex as being higher on inadequate/undesirable. They both perceive the males as being higher on achievement and erotic dominance, and the females as being higher on moral. In terms of the agreement between self-report and perception of the opposite sex, males score females similarly to females' self-reports on the achievement, moral, and erotic dominance dimensions but strongly disagree with females' self-reports on affiliation where they perceive the opposite direction and on inadequate/undesirable where their perception of the difference (11.1 points) is far in excess of the difference between male and female self-reports (1.6). Females perceive far greater

differences on all dimensions than the self-report comparisons exhibit although their perceived differences are in the same direction as the differences between self-reports. Interestingly, the two dimensions where the perceived differences do not concur with theoretical predictions both show the "selves" looking emotionally healthier than the theories would predict. That is to say, males see themselves as more affiliative than females despite the opposite stereotype and also in contrast to the differences in self-reports. Females see themselves as much lower on inadequate/undesirable relative to males than they actually are despite the opposite stereotype. It would probably be considered "healthier" to be high on affiliation and low on inadequate/undesirable. It is important to note that these results may have been affected by the fact that the subjects were comparing a real person, themselves, to a composite person, the average or typical member of the opposite sex.

To draw the results of the perception of opposite sex study together it is easiest to examine each dimension separately. On affiliation, females score somewhat higher than males (4.9 points) but not nearly as much higher as they believe (17.7 points). Their perception of male scores (52.8 points) is far lower than the males' self-reports are (65.6 points). Males perceive themselves as higher on this dimension, scoring females lower than the females score themselves (60.2 versus 70.5). Although they both perceive the other as lower on this dimension than the "others" perceive themselves, the amount of underestimation is relatively equal for both sexes so that the difference between perceived scores (7.4) is actually quite close to the actual difference (4.9).

The second dimension, inadequate/undesirable, is interesting in that the perceived differences are so great compared to the insignificant difference in self-reports. This is the factor on which males and females scored almost identically not only in this study but in all three studies (see Tables 12 and 13). Yet both males and females score the other sex substantially higher (11 or 12 points) than they score themselves. It may not be surprising to find the males responding in this fashion as the stereotype would support them scoring females higher than themselves. However, females scoring males higher than themselves on a dimension that includes adjectives such as inadequate, resentful, inhibited, disagreeable, frigid, and inept, lends support to the notion that sexual meanings are changing and casts doubt on theories that sex has a far more negative meaning for females than for males.

On the achievement dimension the males' self-report score (53.4) is slightly higher than that of the females (50.8). Males score females quite similarly to the females' self-reports and so perceive a difference between themselves and females similar to the difference between self-reports. Females, however, perceive males as being much higher on achievement than males perceive themselves to be (61.0 versus 53.4). They score males substantially higher on achievement than they score themselves (10.2 points), whereas males score females fairly close to themselves (4.6 points). Both sexes support the stereotype that males score higher than females on this dimension, but females judge the difference as much greater than it appears from the self-reports (10.2 versus 2.6).

For the moral factor, the difference between self-reports (4.5 points) approaches significance in the predicted direction of higher female scores. Males score females as about equal to themselves while females score males substantially lower than themselves. Females' perceptions are more in line with stereotypes than are male perceptions and, in this case, the difference between self-reports of males and females is greater than the males' perception of the difference but not as great as the females' perception. The males' and females' perceptions of the opposite sex both disagree (almost equally) with the opposite sex' self-report. Both score the opposite sex lower than the opposite sex scores itself.

The final dimension is erotic dominance. The hypothesized difference was supported with males' self-reports significantly higher than females' self-reports. Males and females both scored the opposite sex about five points above the opposite sex' self-report. In so doing, males perceived a smaller difference than the self-reports showed by perceiving females' scores as closer to their own, while females perceived a greater difference than the self-reports showed.

The examination of the differences in scores from Tables 14 and 15 and the difference in profiles from Table 17 and 18 leads to the most intriguing question to arise from this research: Who is right? In an interpersonal domain such as this, are self-perceptions or other's perceptions more accurate? It is unlikely that either "self" or "others" can be particularly objective. The current data cannot resolve this issue, but clearly it has shown some significant and interesting differences.

Generalizability of the Results

The hundreds of students sampled in this research were all required to participate in experiments as part of their General Psychology course. Self-selection is an issue in that the students were free to choose from many different experiments. Although the announcement for this research stated that students would be scoring adjectives (as opposed to responding to questions about their sexual experiences), some students may have declined to participate due to the nature of the topic under study. To whatever extent this occurred, the sample is biased, but the nature of this bias is unclear. The limitation that is placed on all the preceding analyses results from the age and ethnic group distribution as shown in Tables 3 and 4. Approximately 89 percent of the males and 94 percent of the females were white. Also, approximately 84 percent of the males and 93 percent of the females were between the ages of 18 and 21. All the interpretations that have been made and all the conclusions drawn from the data can be said to apply to a white, college-aged population. Whether they are applicable to other populations as well can be empirically determined in future research.

A second issue of generalizability arises from the issue of predictive and concurrent validity of the MOSE adjective list. Can a MOSE profile be generalized to describe how an individual interacts or will interact with a sex partner? Can the profile describe the types of intimate relationships the individual will prefer or their style in establishing these relationships. If a MOSE profile can provide some information pertaining to these issues it will be far more useful than

if it has no applicability to a person's life. It is hoped that future research will support the MOSE's ability to contribute to the understanding of a person's style of interaction.

Counseling and Clinical Applications

It was stated earlier that a method for gaining information about the meaning of sexual experience for an individual would be a valuable addition to our knowledge of sexual attitudes and behaviors. As meanings are more abstract and internal than are attitudes or behaviors, they are less visible to observers. An apparent result of this lack of visibility has been significantly different perceptions of the opposite sex than the opposite sex has of itself. It appears that, on a broad scale, males and females have not accurately communicated to each other their own personal meanings of sexual experience or their perceptions of their partner's meanings. If further research supports the differences between self-perceived and other-perceived meanings for males and females, it will be important for Counseling Psychologists to work toward increased communication and understanding.

The MOSE adjective list may prove to have several clinical applications. Psychological sexual dysfunctions may be better understood by ascertaining the meaning of the sexual experience to the individual and this may lead to more effective treatment. Kaufman and Krupka (1973) found that in certain cases of sexual dysfunction, early deprivation of affectional needs has led to the sexualization of the need for intimacy. In other cases they noted issues such as guilt feelings, power struggles, hostility, and perceived expectations of competency to be underlying

the dysfunction. As some of these issues relate closely to the meaning dimensions discussed in this study, the MOSE might be useful in yielding such information. Couples in marital therapy might reveal conflicting MOSE profiles as to their meanings of sexual experience. Having them complete the MOSE as they believe their spouse would might be an alternate strategy for uncovering conflicts or miscommunications.

Another population for which the MOSE could prove useful is sex offenders. Perhaps a typical rapist's or exhibitionist's profile might be discovered. At the very least, gaining some insight as to the individual's meaning of sexual experiences would be helpful in understanding his or her actions and might facilitate treatment.

It may be presumptuous to confer so much applicability on a new instrument. Clearly research with the above populations needs to be conducted first. Still, it would seem that the possibilities for counseling and clinical applications of the MOSE are numerous.

Directions for Future Research

The studies presented here are a beginning. They represent the first steps in the development of a methodology to empirically analyze an issue that has only been theoretically analyzed before. Several areas of research that were begun here are as yet incomplete and several other areas are ripe for exploration. It might be useful, for example, to devise an instrument using bipolar rather than unipolar dimensions. The subject could be asked to respond to an adjective pair such as hot-cold on a scale of 1 (hot) to 7 (cold). Bipolar adjective pairs have both advantages and disadvantages compared to unipolar scales and

they might yield different information about the meanings of sexual experience. In addition, to further examine male-female differences, sufficient data should be collected to allow for separate factor analyses for each sex to determine whether they tend to define sexual experience along the same meaning dimensions.

Another research direction to be taken is a series of validity studies to further confirm what has been reported above. The convergent validity study previously discussed was unsuccessful in correlating results of the MOSE with Nelson's (1978) Sexual Functions Measure. The lack of significant correlations may have been due to the four-point scale of the SFM reducing the possible range of scores. It may also be true that the two sets of factors are simply not measuring the same constructs. In any case it is left for future research to confirm the convergent validity of the MOSE. In addition, other studies should evaluate what the MOSE is not measuring in a continual process of providing evidence for the discriminant validity of the instrument.

Predictive and concurrent validity have been mentioned as other research areas left open by the current studies. These would support the usefulness of the MOSE as a clinical as well as a research instrument. At some point research should begin to compare data from behavior, attitude, and meaning scales to be able to incorporate all three dimensions into a more complete understanding of human sexuality. It would also be important to assess social desirability ratings to determine whether the adjectives on the one highly negativistic dimension, inadequate/undesirable, are being responded to less candidly. It is conceivable that these adjectives correlate with one another partially

because they are all negative. This would be a critical element in understanding the clear delineation between the factors.

Several research studies are already being implemented. The first major study is designed to assess the utility of a new set of directions. This latest version of the MOSE (see Appendix D) attempts to clarify and shorten the directions and also changes the scoring categories. The adjectives on the older version were scored on a frequency scale from "almost never" to "almost always" (see Appendix A). It is believed that the ability of an adjective to describe a person's meaning of sexual experience is directly related to the frequency with which that adjective is descriptive. The new MOSE attempts to avoid this inferential leap by supplying end point labels of "not descriptive" and "highly descriptive." The data collected on the new MOSE will be factor analyzed and compared to the original data to determine whether the new directions significantly alter the factors that have been described here.

Other researchers may wish to look for factors other than those reported in this study. The factors of affiliation, inadequate/undesirable, achievement, moral, and erotic dominance are not presented as the only meanings of sexual experience. Other adjectives may be combined with those currently on the MOSE in attempts to elicit support for other meanings or finer gradations of the meanings that emerged here.

Much of the research described above is intended to further clarify and validate the MOSE adjective list. Another suggestion for future research is the comparison of different populations as to their profiles

on the MOSE. Males and females are the groups compared here. The suggestion has been raised previously that groups of sex offenders be studied. Their profiles could be compared both between different offender categories, and between offenders and non-offenders. Heterosexuals and homosexuals could also be compared. Age groups could be compared either to assess cohort differences or to begin to formulate a developmental model of meanings of sexual experience.

Whenever the results of these studies have been presented, suggestions have arisen for new studies or new groups to compare. There appear to be numerous research possibilities for this instrument. The results of the studies described above are intriguing to say the least. It is hoped that the results of future research will prove equally meaningful and that the MOSE adjective list will make a worthwhile contribution to the understanding of human sexuality.

APPENDIX A
THE MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE--III

Part I. Please answer the following questions.

1. AGE _____

2. ETHNIC GROUP (check one): WHITE _____ BLACK _____
SPANISH _____ OTHER (specify) _____

3. SEX: MALE _____ FEMALE _____

Part II. On the following pages you will find a list of 84 adjectives.

We would like you to use these adjectives to describe the personal meaning that sexual experience has for you. That is, we would like you to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 7, how descriptive these adjectives are of the unique meaning of your sexual experiences. Please respond according to the enduring and consistent meanings that you ascribe to sexual experience rather than your immediate feelings about sexual experience. The meaning you ascribe to sexual experience may be derived from the range of your actual sexual experiences or from your thoughts, fantasies, or readings about sexual experience. Read these adjectives quickly and PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY ADJECTIVE UNMARKED.

Coding:	1	NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER	5	OFTEN
	2	USUALLY NOT	6	USUALLY
	3	SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY	7	ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS
	4	OCCASIONALLY		

Adjective list:

1. hot	26. awkward
2. contented	27. unkind
3. mighty	28. uninhibited
4. ambitious	29. attached
5. appropriate	30. forceful
6. inhibited	31. victorious
7. aloof	32. virtuous
8. inadequate	33. cool
9. affectionate	34. yielding
10. lush	35. futile
11. fond	36. ugly
12. aggressive	37. titillating
13. industrious	38. sincere
14. honorable	39. accomplishing
15. controlled	40. clean
16. distant	41. fussy
17. imperfect	42. muted
18. excitable	43. obliging
19. rapturous	44. inept
20. unselfish	45. erotic
21. dominant	46. sociable
22. masterful	47. capable
23. moral	48. dignified
24. frigid	49. infantile
25. distrustful	50. flat

51. passive	68. mischievous
52. devilish	69. amorous
53. ecstatic	70. masculine
54. strong	71. triumphant
55. persevering	72. pure
56. correct	73. hurried
57. robust	74. evasive
58. wary	75. timid
59. feminine	76. offensive
60. naughty	77. outgoing
61. zany	78. potent
62. demanding	79. winning
63. successful	80. righteous
64. proper	81. reserved
65. complex	82. egotistical
66. remote	83. submissive
67. dependent	84. unscrupulous

APPENDIX B
ADJECTIVES INCLUDED ON THE
MEANING OF SEXUAL EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE--III

1. inept	22. moral	43. mighty
2. honorable	23. clean	44. sincere
3. masterful	24. infantile	45. evasive
4. titillating	25. timid	46. amorous
5. demanding	26. affectionate	47. successful
6. muted	27. capable	48. fond
7. submissive	28. uninhibited	49. caring
8. unselfish	29. distrustful	50. exciting
9. dignified	30. appropriate	51. gentle
10. remote	31. flat	52. discrete
11. erotic	32. potent	53. disagreeable
12. aggressive	33. ecstatic	54. assertive
13. frigid	34. winning	55. intimate
14. victorious	35. distant	56. mature
15. futile	36. virtuous	57. daring
16. proper	37. inhibited	58. loving
17. hot	38. awkward	59. imaginative
18. forceful	39. pure	60. kind
19. righteous	40. outgoing	61. undesirable
20. offensive	41. inadequate	62. sensual
21. dominant	42. correct	63. sacred

64. tactful	67. trusting	70. warm
65. resentful	68. determined	
66. inventive	69. serious	

APPENDIX C SEXUAL FUNCTIONS MEASURE

Directions: People have sexual relations (kissing, petting, oral sex, intercourse, etc.) with others for many reasons. The following list includes some of the reasons others have given for their sexual behavior. Some of you will find that nearly all these reasons are important in your own sexual behavior, and some of you will find only a few important. We would like to know all the reasons that are involved in your own sexual behavior, and how important each of these reasons is to you. After considering each of the reasons listed below carefully, indicate on the answer sheet how important that reason is in your own sexual behavior.

Coding: 1 NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL

2 NOT TOO IMPORTANT

3 PRETTY IMPORTANT

4 VERY IMPORTANT

Reasons:

1. Because it gives me such a high feeling.
2. Because I want to be as good or better at it than other people.
3. Because I like the feeling that I have someone in my grasp.
4. Because I enjoy the feeling of being overwhelmed by my partner.
5. Because I want to fit in and be a part of what's happening.
6. Because it's the way I show that I really care about someone.
7. Because it's a good way to overcome boredom.

8. Because I really enjoy indulging my appetite.
9. Because it's a way of proving yourself.
10. Because like many people I enjoy the conquest.
11. Because sex allows me to feel vulnerable.
12. Because otherwise I would begin to feel like an outsider.
13. Because it makes me feel like someone cares about me.
14. Because it adds novelty to my life.
15. Because I am really a physical person.
16. Because a lot of men/women keep telling me how good I am in bed.
17. Because it makes me feel masterful.
18. Because after an argument it's a good way to let my partner know that I don't want to fight anymore.
19. Because the expectations of one's partner and peers are hard to resist.
20. Because it makes me feel as one with another person.
21. Because I'm always seeking something different.
22. Because of rather demanding physical needs.
23. Because it adds to my feelings of competence.
24. Because I like the feeling of having another person submit to me.
25. Because I enjoy the feeling of giving in to my partner.
26. Because there's so much pressure to be sexually active nowadays.
27. Because sex and love are as one to me.
28. Because there is nothing better to do.
29. Because I am a pleasure seeker.
30. Because I'd like to be known as a good lover.
31. Because I like teaching less experienced people how to get off.
32. Because it makes my partner want to look after me and take care of me.

33. Because otherwise I would feel odd, almost abnormal.
34. Because it makes me feel intimate with my partner.
35. Because I'm a person who appreciates variety in life.
36. Because it helps to reduce tension.
37. Because others admire a person who is sexually experienced.
38. Because in the act of sex more than at any other time I get the feeling that I can really influence how someone feels and behaves.
39. Because I like the feeling of being out of control and dominated by another.
40. Because it's a way of avoiding disapproval.
41. Because of the feeling of closeness it brings to a relationship.
42. Because there are so many different horizons to explore.
43. Because I'm just plain horny.
44. Because it makes me feel like I am physically desirable.
45. Because I like it when my partner is really open and vulnerable to me.
46. Because when my partner wants to have sex I feel like I should oblige him/her.
47. Because it's the accepted thing to do and everyone else does it.
48. Because it's the way I show my partner I love him/her.
49. Because I'm curious to know whether there's something I haven't yet experienced.
50. Because it feels good mostly.
51. Because I don't want people to think I'm inadequate.
52. Because when my partner finally surrenders to me I get this incredibly satisfying feeling.

53. Because of the feelings that go along with being held tight and close in a protective way.
54. Because I want to be like everyone else.
55. Because I enjoy being affectionate and sharing of my feelings.
56. Because it's an adventure of sorts.

APPENDIX D
THE INTERPERSONAL MEANING OF
SEXUAL EXPERIENCE ADJECTIVE SCALE

Directions: Sexual experiences have various meanings for different people. The unique meanings that sexual experience has for you may be the result of your actual experiences with kissing, petting, intercourse, etc., or they may be the result of your thoughts, fantasies, or readings about sexual experience.

On the following pages you will find a list of 70 adjectives. Indicate, by circling a number from 1 to 7, how descriptive each of the adjectives is of your personal meaning of sexual experience.

Circle "1" to indicate that the adjective is NOT DESCRIPTIVE.

Circle "7" to indicate that the adjective is HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE.

Use the numbers "2," "3," "4," "5," or "6" if the adjective is between being NOT DESCRIPTIVE and being HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE.

PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY ADJECTIVE UNMARKED.

* * * * *

	NOT DESCRIPTIVE						HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE	
1. inept	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. honorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. masterful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. titillating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. demanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

	NOT DESCRIPTIVE					HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE	
6. muted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. submissive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. unselfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. dignified	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. remote	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. erotic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. frigid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. victorious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. futile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. proper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. hot	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. righteous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. offensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. moral	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. clean	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. infantile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. timid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. capable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. uninhibited	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. distrustful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	NOT DESCRIPTIVE						HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE	
30. appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
31. flat	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
32. potent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
33. ecstatic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
34. winning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
35. distant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
36. virtuous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
37. inhibited	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
38. awkward	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
39. pure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
40. outgoing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
41. inadequate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
42. correct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
43. mighty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
44. sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
45. evasive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
46. amorous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
47. successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
48. fond	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
49. caring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
50. exciting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
51. gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
52. discrete	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
53. disagreeable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

	NOT DESCRIPTIVE					HIGHLY DESCRIPTIVE	
54. assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. intimate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. mature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. daring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. loving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. imaginative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. kind	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61. undesirable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62. sensual	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63. sacred	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64. tactful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65. resentful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66. inventive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
67. trusting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
68. determined	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
69. serious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
70. warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David N. Bernstein was born in Brooklyn, New York, on February 12, 1948. He received his early education in the New York City Public School system, graduating from high school in June, 1965. In June, 1969, he received his Bachelor of Science degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, majoring in mathematics.

From 1969 through 1978, David taught mathematics at Jamaica High School in Queens, New York. During that time he attended Queens College of the City University of New York and was granted a Master of Arts degree in mathematics/secondary education in January, 1973. He also completed the requirements for certification as a reality therapist. In September, 1978, he requested a leave of absence from teaching, and began his studies in counseling psychology at the University of Florida.

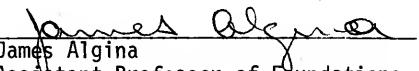
In September, 1981, David began interning at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in East Orange, New Jersey. The Doctor of Philosophy degree is expected to be conferred in May, 1982. At the completion of his graduate studies, David plans to seek employment as a Counseling Psychologist in a setting that offers the opportunity of working in conjunction with other health care professionals.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



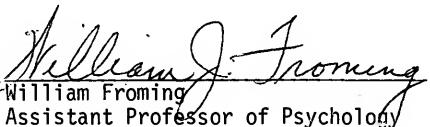
Harry Grater, Chairman
Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



James Algina
Assistant Professor of Foundations
of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



William Froming
Assistant Professor of Psychology

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



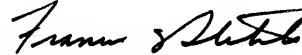
Patricia Miller
Associate Professor of Psychology

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Dorothy O'Neill
Dorothy Nevitt
Associate Professor of Psychology

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

May 1982


Frank J. Shatto
Dean, Graduate School